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NOTES ON NEW BOOKS

Biography

LONELY AMERICANS *by Rollo Walter Brown* (COWARD-MCCANN. $3.50).

UPON his title-page Mr. Brown has placed, as the key to his book, the following: "It isolates one anywhere to think beyond a certain point". These eight Americans were lonely in the sense that they were individualists, highly endowed and courageous. Grouped together they make an inspiriting company. Our country is continually reproached by Europeans on the ground of its unfriendliness to the exceptional type; and it is unfortunately true that it is the conformist and the middle-of-the-roader whom our institutions chiefly encourage. Here, however, are eight eminent rebels who have also received popular approval. Raphael Pumpelly, "cosmic prospector", is probably the least known of the group and one wonders why, for his story covers four-score years of gorgeous adventure. Charles Eliot Norton's fame is perhaps more local than it merits. President Eliot was the perfect type of the intellectual's isolation among multitudes. Edward MacDowell and George Bellows were stalwart examples of the artist who refuses to be driven. Emily Dickinson, the only instance of deliberate withdrawal, had nevertheless all a poet's understanding of human character. In each case, Mr. Brown has approached his subject with knowledge, spirit and intimate sympathy, even writing of Lincoln and of Whistler freshly. This is an important book.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY AND CERTAIN MEN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY TORMENT *by Marie Cher* (APPLETON. $2.50).

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AS GOD MADE THEM *by Gamaliel Bradford* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $3.50).

MR. BRADFORD'S seven sketches are neat, systematic, more or less uniform, but they lack the fusing touch of the artist. In the cases of Webster, Clay and Calhoun, no less than in that of Booth, it would be a feat for any biographer to probe deeply and determinedly enough, below the misleading surfaces of the actor. In fact, while Booth is credited with "a domestic, quiet temperament", and is shown as perpetually struggling to be a human being as well as a stage figure, the politicians of 1850 were perhaps actors before they were men. Mr. Bradford pictures Webster, on his death-bed, as demanding, after first making sure of a proper audience: "Have I, on this occasion, said anything unworthy of Daniel Webster?" He admits that when Clay, incurable rhetorician, "had a sorrow, he made a speech". And Calhoun, hoping for the presidency, postured in this fashion:—"I would rather stand alone in my glory . . . untainted and untouched by the time, than to be President of these States on any other condition than through discharge of my duty".

Greeley, because nearer to us, should be more comprehensible, but the complications and contradictions of his nature are not reconciled with complete success. In the studies of Francis James Child and Asa Gray no such problem of reconciliation presents itself and two harmonious, distinguished and memorable lives are smoothly outlined.

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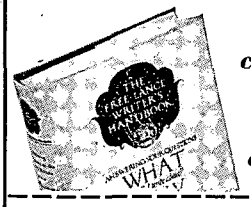

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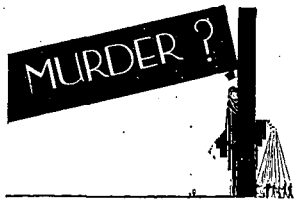

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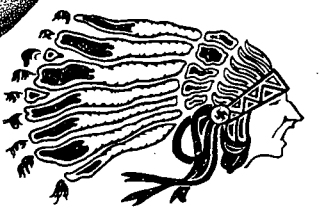

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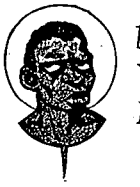

by Carl Von Hoffmann

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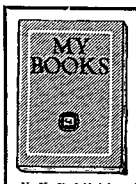

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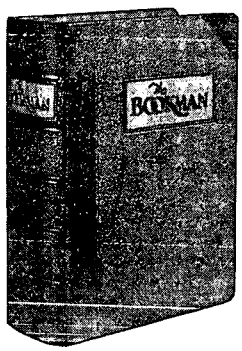

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undergraduate's time; the rôle of fraternity and club. Mr. Hawes discounts the popular notion, Hollywood-born, that college men and women drink to excess and carry on generally. He courageously points out that there is no collegiate democracy other than "giving the square deal"; hence, social stratification among undergraduates is inevitable but not necessarily deplorable. There is a careful description of life at specific universities: the Big Three, the city institutions, the state universities, etc. An entire chapter is "For the Ladies".

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(CONTINUED ON PAGE XXI)

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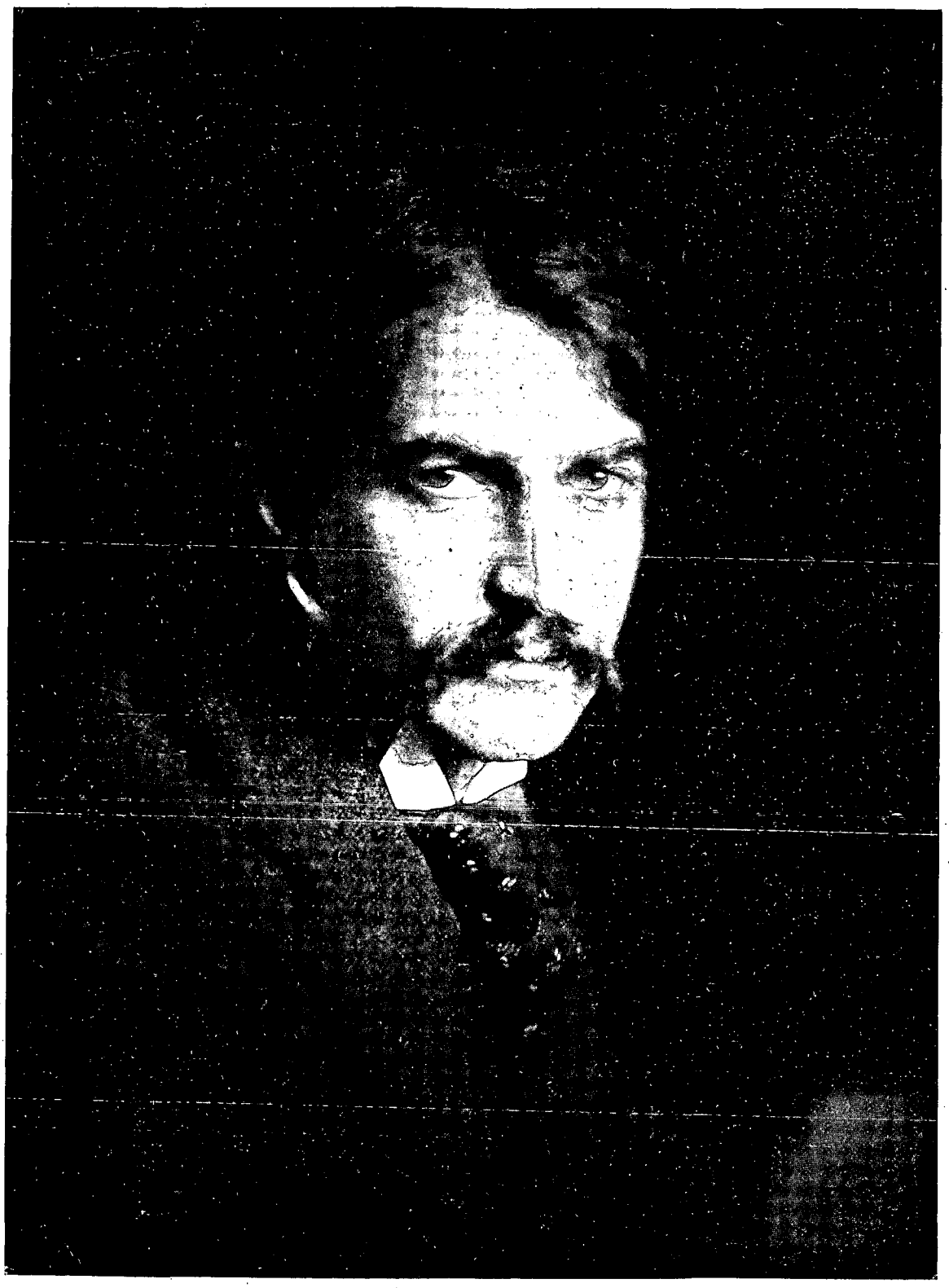

STEPHEN CRANE

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THE BOOKMAN

Edited by Seward Collins

MAY, 1929 VOL. LXIX; NO. 3

THE LETTERS OF JOSEPH CONRAD TO STEPHEN AND CORA CRANE

edited by Carl Bohnenberger and Norman Mitchell Hill

PART I

He shook his hand above his head in a gesture careless and tragic, then walked down into the mist that closed above him in shining undulations . . . .

—*An Outcast of the Islands*

STEPHEN CRANE and Joseph Conrad! A meeting of a moment—a friendship of two fate-tossed men on the ocean of life—a pause—a whisper of understanding—then one was hurried away. Gone through the shadowy curtains behind which, as they closed about him, came a cry of ironic laughter.

Thus was the friendship of the great master of the English novel and the young flashing genius of America. A friendship which has become a vivid instant in the adventure of American letters.

The artist, remarks Conrad in "the fragment of biography" called *A Personal Record,* writes for his friends. Friends who are drawn from the universe of people—pulled out by the magnetic attraction that lies in the perfect art hidden in a sentence, blossoming in an entire book. They are like fish drawn up. And, he adds, fishing is notoriously a matter of luck.

Whether this holds true in the experience of other men who have written is not a matter of any interest here. Sufficient, that the writing of *The Nigger of the Narcissus,* "ten months of strenuous work from my pen", drew Stephen Crane to the man who created the legend of Domkin and the terror of the *Narcissus.* But it is also true that Conrad in turn wished to know the author of *The Red Badge of Courage;* for here, he thought, is a man who will understand. "It is a fact that I considered Crane, by virtue of his creative experience with *The Red Badge of Courage* as eminently fit to pronounce a judgment on my first consciously planned attempt to render the truth of a phase of life. . . ."

In many of Conrad's books, there is the conjured-up, tragic figure of Stephen Crane. *The Mirror of the Sea* was alien to the personality of Crane. But it may be that his shadow hovers over some of the pages of the

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novels, and it is certainly true that it was Crane who first insisted, and passionately, that Conrad write plays, and, in fact, projected one for their collaboration during the early days of their friendship. But whether there is a hint of Crane the realist, Crane the impressionist, in the pages of the novels that came after 1900 is another matter that is better left to those who cast out nets for stylistic relationships and literary antecedents. But what is apparent, however, are the constant and noble footnotes by Joseph Conrad on the life and art of Stephen Crane. He never ceased to write of Stephen; he never closed his memory of the friendship of such warm intensity and grim brevity. To him the personality of Crane had become the "endless" thing that "Steve" had wished it to be. In an unpublished letter of 1908 Conrad wrote to Mrs. Crane: "Hardly a day passes without my thought turning to that genius so soon lost to the world. . ." Before 1908, in America, the name of Crane had already faded and become tattered into something that could not be dissociated from that of a newspaper man who had written some books. The triumph of the mediocre was nearly complete—for the moment.

Again, in *A Personal Record,* Conrad suddenly writes: ". . . A man almost childlike in the impulsive movements of his untutored genius, the most single-minded of verbal impressionists, using his great gifts of straight feeling and right expression with a fine sincerity and a strong if, perhaps, not fully conscious, conviction. His art did not obtain, I fear, all the credit its unsophisticated inspiration deserved. I am alluding to the late Stephen Crane, the author of *The Red Badge of Courage,* a work of imagination which found its short moment of celebrity in the last decade of the departed century. Other books followed. Not many. He had not the time. It was an individual and complete talent, which obtained but a grudging, somewhat supercilious, recognition from the world at large. . . . I confess to an abiding affection for that energetic, slight, fragile, intensely living and transient figure. . . ." In 1919 he wrote in *The London Mercury* the sketch of Crane subtitled "Note Without Dates", which later was included in the *Notes on Life and Letters.* Concluding, he compares the strange flashing of Crane's life to "that of a horseman riding swiftly in the dawn of a day fated to be short and without sunshine". In 1923 Mr. Beer published his magnificent biography of Crane, and Conrad wrote the foreword—a foreword which left Mr. Beer with little to add of the friendship of these two men, so completely and admirably does Conrad project the personality of Crane in relation to his own life during the feverish travail of the darkest days of Conrad's career.

Lately, Harvey Wickham has had something to say about this introduction. He was writing of Crane's little-known school days on the Hudson. He denies "the soft chap created by the sentimentalizing imagination of Conrad's declining years". It occurs to us that Mr. Wickham's overemphasis of his own portrayal of Crane runs much the greater danger of being called "sentimental". The Crane who could lean across the table and say, "I—like—that—Joseph", was a man who had journeyed very far since the days when Mr. Wickham knew him as a rather brusque, abrupt youngster who was more cynic than critic. It need not be assumed that Crane sold his birthright or any such absurdity. He had simply come farther, lived more, loved much—had learned most of the secrets of life and, in some peculiar manner, perceived that he was soon to know the secret of death.

In 1924, a short time before his death, Conrad penned a preface to *The Red Badge.* And finally, though naturally they come first, are these letters, recently discovered, of Conrad to Stephen and to Cora, the remarkable woman who was the wife of the author of *Maggie.*

'Ninety-seven found two great countries on the verge of minor wars—one of which was

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to be the scene of the first war activities of the man who had written so thoroughly of war in *The Red Badge*. It was also to be the beginning of his death. And that, in its ironic way, was logical. Crane, when he first shook hands with Conrad over a table in Gatti's, was twenty-six, and Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski was forty. Behind him Conrad had *Almayer's Folly, An Outcast of the Islands, The Nigger of the Narcissus* and *Tales of Unrest*. *Almayer's Folly* had come first, in 1892, although he had struggled with it since the beginning of the decline of his sea-faring days in '89. The others followed, *An Outcast of the Islands* coming a year later on the advice, at once flippant and sage, of Mr. Garnett, who was also to be an admirer and friend of Crane. The legend of Domkin and the crew of Conrad's old ship *Narcissus* was written in '97, *Lord Jim* was in projection and *The Rescue* started on the troubled voyage which was not to end until 1921. Crane came into Conrad's life at the moment when the indomitable Pole was faced by those inexplicable difficulties and disasters which threaten to wreck the careers of great beginners. He found the going slow and not at all profitable. His great groans of disgust and despair are like the shoutings of a chained Prometheus. In England he was known to only a relatively small group. Though each of his books had been on sale in the United States, as he bitingly remarks in a later letter to Garnett, he had scored there hardly at all. In an unpublished letter to Crane in November of 1897, Hamlin Garland confesses that he has no knowledge of Conrad's art, and requests a copy of a book which Crane praised rapturously. It was either *The Nigger of the Narcissus* or *Almayer's Folly*. The former, Crane was reading serially, and a few weeks after their meeting Conrad presented him with a copy of *Almayer's Folly*, writing on the flyleaf: "To Stephen Crane, with the greatest regard and most sincere admiration, from Joseph Conrad". James Huneker admits that he first heard of the author of the *Heart of Darkness* from the lips of Crane during the latter's vacillating stay in New York before he returned to England to take up his odd position as lord of Brede Place.

Compared with Conrad, Crane was a veteran. He had published his first book in '91. He had written *Maggie, George's Mother, The Red Badge, The Open Boat, The Third Violet* and a host of amazing short stories and sketches. This seniority in letters amused Conrad and kindled his admiration for the younger man. Crane had a large audience in both England and America. The American public was spurred on by the numerous legends, rumors and innuendoes that enveloped the figure of the young man in a romantic haze. The reception of *The Red Badge* in England had been more than cordial. Garnett, Wyndham, Ford Madox Ford and H. G. Wells, to say nothing of many others, hailed the advent of a new genius. Crane was too lucky in this sort of thing. From the days when Howells, Garland and Bacheller had pounded into the long ears of the American public of the 'nineties that Crane's impressionism was art and not obscenity, Crane was overwhelmed by a host of people who threatened to push him under. He was denied the greatest necessity of a man of his type—a certain brooding solitude without which his art may die. He was forced to make it, and seize it, in breathless moments. From the episode of the rather absurd dinner at East Aurora under the benign radiance of Elbert Hubbard in '95 to the twilight days of Brede he was never really alone.

It remains a mere chance of Fate that Conrad and Crane should meet and, having met, become firm friends. Or it is the most natural thing in the world, depending upon one's observation of Fate and Art. Nevertheless, there were poignant differences which were part of the nature of each man—dissimilarities that had to do with tradition and race—dangerous as the last word is when speaking of Joseph Conrad. But, without going into it

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at greater length, it is not difficult to perceive that most of the others who were Conrad's friends and associates at that time and later were closer to him in these things than the young fellow who loved the shadows of the Bowery; who loved the dark streets of New York in a way that bore no likeness to Conrad's fascination in Mediterranean ports and ancient wharves. The signorino of the ill-fated *Tremolino,* of the reckless Carlist adventure, the man who cried out as Spain fell whimpering before the hated Americans, *"Viva España!"* was, in full, "a child . . . of a chivalrous tradition". In spite of Conrad's refutation, Mr. Mencken was not entirely wrong.

The peculiar tenderness of their relationship is a revelatory thing. It had a flavor unlike anything that anyone outside of Conrad's own family received. A man with the greatest power of observation and a consummate knowledge of mankind, with a clarity of vision that had come from the sea, Conrad cared for men in the many ways that his greatness allowed him to see them. Before Stephen Crane everything fell away and was vanquished in the art and humanity in which each was supreme. The Crane who wrote of gaunt Yankee soldiers and of desolate human beings, plucked out of the rude mass of America, understood the mind that created Almayer, the symbol of tragic hope, and Peter Willems, the child of despair; and was understood.

There is one thing more to be added of Conrad—that he had an elusive grandeur and an atmosphere of greatness that struck discerning men when they came face to face with him. He was within himself a universe. Crane, having something of the same thing in his own way, saw this at once. Conrad has testified to his own emotions at the time, and Crane's eagerness to continue the friendship that began on that day in October discloses the rest.

It is certainly not the intention here, as has been intimated, to go fully into the question of the possible influence of the two men on each other's art. At the most it would be a risky guess to couple, in any way, the impish satire in Crane's art with the grim relentlessness of Conrad's. But had Crane lived, something might have happened to his work. It is possible that his continued friendship with Conrad and his growing knowledge of the latter's artistic manner might have marked a turning point in his tumultuous life. What revolutions might have occurred is merely a question of conjecture. Such things have happened before. What we can guess, however, is that Crane's flashes, at once so great and so feeble, might have evolved into something of greater staunchness and strength, durability and timelessness. It may have been coming, though certainly there is no sign in the opening chapters of *The O'Ruddy*. But *The Wounds in the Rain* is a matter of speculation. There are pages in this that are amazing, and have nothing to do with Crane's past writing. Conrad understood the weakness of Crane. In a letter to Mr. Garnett he points out the weak spot in too much of Crane's art—an art which, perfect in itself, fails constantly to hold the reader after the reading. Conrad never alluded to this again. But with his unerring eye he detected the very thing which makes the most eulogistic of Crane's admirers sometimes pause. It is the single negative note in a great manner.

But face to face both Conrad and Crane knew that they were in the presence of a miracle. What they gained from each other esthetically remains a mystery as inscrutable as the reason for the tragedy in the younger man's existence. A Crane with the twisting power of description gone—a Crane without the fierce, swift and black compression—what should we have had?

Crane had stopped in England on his way to the tarnished Isles of Greece to report the Balkan War for William Randolph Hearst's New York *Journal* and the London *West-*

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minster Gazette. But he was lost in Greece, and disgusted and baffled by what little war he had seen. In truth, the author of *The Red Badge of Courage* had missed a war. He had seen and heard nothing that resembled anything but a parade of gold-tasseled and flaming uniforms and a mass of miserable refugees. He returned to Athens from the front, patiently calm while others pointed out the marvels of a classic civilization. He fell ill, and suddenly Cora Howorth Stewart Taylor arrived.

He had met her in June of '96 or thereabouts in Jacksonville, where he had languidly lounged the days away on the porch of the old St. James Hotel and watched the game of filibustering. He had joined in the sport of twisting the Spanish lion's tail, and had been wrecked on the *Commodore*. Cora had gone almost mad when news flashed that the pale young correspondent had been lost. He left Jacksonville for New York, which was the first step to Greece. She followed him, and found him sick in Athens. Something of this can be read in *Active Service,* the weakest of all of Crane's works but the most important from an autobiographic viewpoint. The kindly interest of Mr. Eben Alexander, the American minister (to whom Crane dedicated *Active Service* and who appears in the book) and a hurried telegram to Mr. Hearst secured enough money to carry Crane and his wife to England. He must have married Cora on the continent, although no record remains of the place or date among her intimate papers. An odd lot of reports of the war scenes signed by "Imogene Carter, the *Journal's* Woman War Correspondent" seems to throw some light on her activities in Greece—although Crane may well have written the news bulletins for her while lying ill in the hotel in Athens.

She was, without doubt, the most amazing figure who entered the turbulent and stormy life of Stephen Crane. She was the archetype, the incarnation of *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*. She became his devoted and ambitious comrade during the last four years of his life. No one who has written of Crane seems to have been aware of this tremendous force in his life.

In an earlier age, or in different circles from those in which she lived, she would have wielded an influence sufficient to alter the history of nations. Kingdoms have been won by feebler hands than hers, and thrown away at the beck of personalities less magnetic. She had boundless ambition; it found its outlet in the energetic activities into which she threw herself—in the end her world smashed with the death of Stephen.

Crane, restored to health for a moment, found a brilliant world in England. The petals of the purple flower were wilting, but in its place there was a new strength and great books were being written. He stayed, urged by Harold Frederic and his other friends. Cora wished it, he was tired, England was cordial. Mr. Sidney Pawling was ready on behalf of the house of Heinemann to receive anything he might care to give them. Back in 1895 when Heinemann's had taken over the English rights to *The Red Badge of Courage* Pawling wrote Crane warmly praising the book and mentioning Mr. Wyndham's high opinion of it. Crane had probably taken Wyndham and his exalted rank of secretary to Arthur James Balfour with a sardonic grin, but he must have valued the praise of the tall Englishman, for he kept the letter.

To Pawling Crane expressed the desire to know the author of *The Nigger of the Narcissus,* and Conrad is undoubtedly correct when he remembers the date of their meeting as being some time in October, 1897, for his first letter to Crane is dated November, the sixteenth. He and Crane had held one long conference.

My Dear Crane,

I must write to you before I write a single word for a living today. I was anxious to know what you would think of the end. If I've hit *you* with the death of Jimmy I don't care if I

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don't hit another man. I think however that artistically the end of the book is somewhat lame. I mean after the death. All that rigmarole about the burial and the ship's coming home seems to run away into a rat's tail—thin at the end. Well! It's too late now to bite my thumbs and tear my hair. When I feel depressed about it I say to myself "Crane likes the damned thing"—and am greatly consoled. What your appreciation is to me I renounce to explain. The world looks different to me now, since our long powwow. It was good. The memory of it is good. And now and then (human nature *is* a vile thing) I ask myself whether you meant half of what you said! You must forgive me. The mistrust is not of you—it is of myself: the drop of poison in the cup of life. I am no more vile than my neighbors but this disbelief in one's self is like a taint that spreads on everything one comes in contact with: on men—on things—on the very air one breathes. That's why one sometimes wishes to be a stone breaker. There's no doubt about breaking a stone. But there's doubt, fear—a black horror, in every page one writes. You at any rate will understand and therefore I write to you as though we had been born together before the beginning of things. For what you have done and intend to do I won't even attempt to thank you. I certainly don't know what to say, tho' I am perfectly certain as to what I feel.

I know that it is perfectly right and proper from a ceremonial point of view that I should come to you first. But, my dear fellow, it's impossible. . . . As to myself I would come speedily and I shall come as soon as I can get away with a free mind. Meantime show your condescension by coming to me first. After this week I haven't any engagements. Just drop a postcard saying *I'm coming* and I shall meet the train from Fenchurch Street. You have trains at *11:20 am; 1:45 pm; 3:28 pm; 5:5 pm; 5:53 pm; 8:13 pm.* Last train to town at night is at *8,* arrives in London at *9:30.* But we can put you up in a bachelor's quarters. I should love to have you under my roof. And come soon for when the circus begins here and the house is full of doctors and nurses there will be no place for the poor literary man. Finish to catch the post.

Ever yours

Jph. Conrad

Crane went. There at Ivy Walls, Stanford-le-Hope, in Essex, which Conrad had leased when he returned from Brittany in '95 with his bride, he met Jessie Conrad, who through her kindness and character was to become a guiding light during Crane's last years. In her recent sketch of Stephen Crane as she remembered him during his English days, she tells how Conrad warned her that she was to meet a remarkable personality. She found his prediction true when she came face to face with the eager, somewhat shy, young American. Crane stayed several days that first time, and the affection of the two men deepened.

The next letter is one of those fine emanations of critical praise that sometimes came from Conrad's pen:

1st Dec. 1897.

My Dear Crane:

Glad to hear you haven't had your head taken off. We had here on Monday a high tide that smashed the sea-wall, flooded the marshes and washed away the Rwy line. Great excitement.

But *my* great excitement was reading your stories. Garnett's right. *A Man and Some Others* is immense. I can't spin a long yarn about it but I admire it without reserve. It is an amazing bit of biography. I am envious of you—horribly. Confound you—you fill the blamed landscape—you—by all the devils—fill the sea-scape. The boat thing is immensely interesting. I don't use the word in its common sense. It is fundamentally interesting to me. Your temperament makes old things new and new things amazing. I want to swear at you, to bless you—perhaps to shoot you—but I prefer to be your friend.

You are an everlasting surprise to one. You shock—and the next moment you give the perfect artistic satisfaction. Your method is fascinating. You are a complete impressionist. The illusions of life come out of your hand without a flaw. It is not life—which nobody wants—it is art—art for which everyone—the abject and the great—hankers—mostly without knowing it.

Ever yours,

Jph. Conrad

Some time passed before they saw each

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other again, and on the day before Christmas Conrad wrote Crane:

24 Dec. 1897

My Dear Crane

Just a word to wish—from us both—to you and Mrs. Crane all imaginable prosperity and all the happiness that may be found in this merry world.

How are you getting on? I struggle along feeling pretty sick of it all. The New Year does not announce itself very brightly for me—and that's a fact. Well! A bad beginning may make a good ending. Tho' I don't believe it much.

Criticisms (!) are coming in. Some praise, some blame, both very stupid.

Yours ever

Jph. Conrad

P.S. Have you seen the *Daily Tele.* article by Courtney? He does not understand you—and he does not understand me either. That's a feather in our caps, anyhow. Do you think I tried to imitate you? No Sir! I may be a little fool but I know better than to try to imitate the inimitable. But here it is. Courtney says it. You are a lost sinner and you have led me astray. If it was true I would be well content to follow you, but it isn't true. Three cheers for the Press!

Your

J. C.

Conrad's experiences then and later with the press were never of the warmest. He mistrusted the monster of words as much as he despised the modern steamship. But poor Courtney was not the only man who seemed to read in Conrad's pages either a conscious or unconscious striving after the effects of Crane. Mr. Garnett speaks of Quiller-Couch and many another critic who at the time thought Conrad's work showed signs of the influence of the author of *The Red Badge.*

Borys was born on the fifteenth, and the next day Conrad wrote hurriedly to Crane:

16 Jan 98

My Dear Crane

Don't you bother about writing unless you feel like it. I quite understand how you feel about it—and am not likely to forget you because you don't write. Still mind when you do write you give me a very great pleasure.

A male infant arrived yesterday and made a devil of a row. He yelled like an Apache and ever since this morning has been on the war-path again. It's a ghastly nuisance.

Look here—when you are coming to town next time just fling a sixpence away on a wire (the day before) to me and I shall try to run up too. If detained shall wire care Heinemann's.

Ever yours

Jph. Conrad

Say—what about *The Monster.* The damned story has been haunting me ever since. I think it must be fine. It's a subject for you.

But Conrad found life pressing relentlessly against him. He was surrounded by a mass of unfinished tasks and unfulfilled promises. And ill-health—both for himself and his wife. Stephen and Cora urged him to come to Ravenslow, with, of course, the ubiquitous baby (whom Conrad regarded as the "Ominous Baby"). Cora sent Mrs. Conrad flowers and warmly seconded the invitation. Conrad's first letter, to the woman whom he was to know through twice tragic days, follows:

25 Jan 1898

Dear Mrs. Crane:

My wife shall write as soon as she is allowed to sit up. Meantime let me send you our warmest thanks for the beautiful flowers and for your very kind invitation.

I would hesitate to inflict myself upon you with the tribe—but since you call your fate upon your own head the temptation to please ourselves is too irresistible. So, all being well, we shall descend upon your peaceful homestead on the 19th. I have ground to hope that by that date my wife shall be able to travel. We shall meantime devote all our energies to the taming of the Baby lest he should break out and devastate your countryside, which, I feel, would put you and Crane in a false position *vis-à-vis* your neighbors. Perhaps a strong iron cage would be the most effective expedient; however we shall judge at the time the exact degree of his ferocity and act accordingly. My most earnest considera-

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tion had been given also to the matter of a good reliable keeper—which you with such kind forethought mention yourself. My wife will want some help, not being even at the best of times very athletic. Could we—instead of a nurse—whom we have not—bring Dolly, whom we have. Dolly is a young person with her hair down her back, and of extreme docility. I have the distinction of being her brother-in-law. She is now (and for the next six months) staying with us for the sake of her health and to help my wife. Will you frankly tell me whether there is the slightest objection to this plan. As Crane perhaps told you I am cheeky but easily repressed. You must really forgive me the coolness of my impudence.

The child is, I am sorry to say, absolutely callous to the honor awaiting him of his very first visit being to your house. I talked myself hoarse trying to explain to him the greatness of the occurrence—all in vain. I want Crane to give him his artistic benediction and call upon his head the spirit—the magnificent spirit that is his familiar—the genius of his work. And then when our writing days are over he who is a child today may write good prose—may toss a few pearls before the Philistines. I am, dear Mrs. Crane, your most obedient and faithful servant.

Jph. Conrad

Pent Farm
Stanford, Near Hythe

Dear Mrs. Crane:

Just a word. Your expected letter did not come this morning. Ever so many thanks for allowing Dolly to come. I think if you don't mind that we shall come on Saty. as we made arrangements with whitewashers and such like ruffians to come into the house on Monday. I shall bring my dress clothes along and we shall both try to be a credit to you and Stephen. Please say if we may come *early* on Sat.? About noon. Unless we hear from you we shall do so —and write on Thursday the exact time.

In awful haste your most obedt. and faithful servant.

Jph. Conrad

Jessie's love.

At one of their meetings and probably during Crane's visit to Stanford-le-Hope, Crane had with characteristic vehemence urged Conrad to join him in writing a play with an American setting. Mr. Garnett has described this vividly.

Sometime during January Conrad wrote Crane:

My dear Crane

I hope you haven't been angry with me. Fact is my dear fellow I've been having a hell of a time—what with one thing and another. Had I come that day I would have been no good at all. I am hardly yet in a decent frame of mind.

I am very curious to know your idea; but I feel somehow that collaborating with you would be either cheating or deceiving you. In any case disappointing you. I have no dramatic gift. *You* have the terseness, the clear eye—the easy imagination. You have all—and I have only the accursed faculty of dreaming. My ideas fade—yours come out sharp cut as cameos—they come all living out of your brain and bring images —and bring light. Mine bring only mist in which they are born and die. I would be only a hindrance to you—I am afraid. And it seems presumptuous of me to think of helping you. You want no help. I have a perfect confidence in your power—and why should you share with me what there may be of profit and fame in the accomplished task?

But I want to know! Your idea is good—I am certain. Perhaps you, yourself, don't know how good it is. I ask you as a friend's favor to let me have a sketch of it when you have the time and in a moment of inclination. I shall—if you allow me—write you *all* I think of it, about it, around it. Then you shall see how worthless I would be to you. But if by chance such was not your deliberate opinion—if you should really, honestly artistically think I could be of some use—then my dear Crane I would be only too glad to work by your side and with your lead. And *quién sabe?* Something perhaps would get itself shaped to be mangled by the scorn or the praise of the Philistines.

Take your time and answer me. My wife sends kind regards. . . I can't write. The *D'ly Mail* has given a bad notice to the *Nigger.* There is no other news here.

Yours ever

Jph. Conrad

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This letter has been held back and now since I can't come I send it. My sister-in-law must go away tomorrow, and I can't leave my wife all alone here.

Do write your idea. I am anxious.

Yours

J. C.

It was years later, of course, that Conrad wrote his plays. But Crane did write two, neither of which, however, was ever published. One was left unfinished. The other is complete—a short one-act play both in holograph manuscript and typewritten form. It was not given a title, having simply written on the advance sheet, "By Stephen Crane". Crane must have written this while very young. It must have been the seed of *The O'Ruddy*. For there is a sharp resemblance. It is that kind—a swashbuckling, roistering Eighteenth Century atmosphere. It is somewhat in the manner of Stevenson and Henley's *Macaire*. It is laid in "the interior of an old inn in France" with "four soldiers carousing" . . . "red reflections on the walls" . . . "a window showing moonlight" . . . "room rather shadowy".

In the ending only is there something of Crane. One of these soldiers makes a wager to fight with the first man who enters the tavern. He will fight simply for the joy of an engagement—for the delight of crossing swords. A great lord enters and is forced into a quarrel. At the same time a mysterious figure, enveloped in a heavy red cloak, slips into the room and watches from the darkest corner.

The soldier "P—," who is to fight the duel on the morrow, offers a toast:

"(As P. holds aloft his glass in a great gesture and as the name rings out, the red cloak flashes from the figure, and a gray ghastly head is discovered staring at P. A moment of silent staring.)

P. (calmly), 'Here's the devil's head!'

Stranger (with a shiver), 'An omen, sir, an omen! We fight in the morning! Pray heaven ——'

P. (steadily), 'It is as chance may have it, my lord! In the meantime I will see what ghoul dare start and stare at toast that I offer!'

(all restrain him)

B. No, no, P! It is some damnable child of witches and devils!'

A. 'It is death, P! No, no, come back!'

P. (shaking them off), 'Nonsense! If he is death, he shall explain why he is here to take men's hearts from them on the eve of fighting or I'll—cudgel him. (draws and advances toward the imperturbable figure and in midstage halts) Sir, are you a man or a corpse? Speak quickly or a sword will make you!'

(the figure rises and goes slowly toward P., who does not flinch)

The figure, 'A threat of wind. If I am a corpse why need I fear thrust of thine?' (exit through door C.)

(all remain transfixed staring at the closed door)

(Curtain)

Of the other play, there is little to be said. It was one of the many things that Crane brought back from Cuba with him—memories of plots that had flashed into his mind amid the hail of bullets and the hardships of tramping roads. The scene is laid in Cuba during the war, and centres about a skirmish between the American and Spanish forces. There is a conventional Richard-Harding-Davis lieutenant, the usual mannerisms and trembling women who fall in love with the hero. In other words, merely an idea of Crane's which he did not ever allow to go very far. He may have written the two acts while he restlessly haunted New York for the last time.

The famous play plotted with Conrad was never to come to light. The plot is known from Conrad's description, but nothing of it exists in Crane's papers. It remained as Conrad said, "A play to write is no play". There is only a single mention of it again in the letters after Crane's return.

A glimpse of the intimacy between the two men is caught in these two letters:

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Tuesday

My dear Crane

I've been rather seedy lately—all worry I think. But I am going to put my worries aside and have a real good time with you. I shall wire you on Sat. by what train we are coming; sometime in the afternoon but not late. I shall bring a lot of paper and you shall find a pen—I am anxious to know what you have done with your idea for a play. A play to write is no play. I believe you can do anything.

Ever yours

J. Conrad.

Our kindest regards to Mrs. Crane. Baby sends a friendly howl.

5th Febr. 98

Dear Stephen—

We got home last night—Ever since I've left you I am wondering how you have passed through your crisis. I would like to hear all is well; it hurts me to think you are worried. It is bad for you and it is bad for your art. All the time I was at the Garnett's we have been talking of you. We conclude you must be kept quiet; but who is going to work that miracle?

We trust in Mrs. Crane and in the sagacity of publishers. That last is not much to trust to —I admit. Still! . . .

I've had letters of thanks from Pearson and Blackwood for inducing you to call on them. The Pearson man writes he hopes they shall be able very soon to do something quite satisfactory to Mr. Crane "if he gives us an opportunity". The Blackwood man sends an invite to lunch for the week after next to you and me if you will condescend to accept that invitation through me. It appears old Blackwood is coming to London himself to make your and my acquaintance. He is a good old Scotchman and if you like the idea drop me a line to name the day. It is left to you.

Your whiskey old man has effected a cure and I feel quite fit for work. How long that disposition will last only the devil in charge of my affairs knows. I miss you horribly. In fact Ravensbrook and its inhabitants have left an indelible memory. Some day—perhaps next year—we must take a house together—say in Brittany for three months or so. It would work smoothly—I am sure.

Present my respectful and most friendly regards to your wife and assure her of our gratitude for her more than charming hospitality. My wife sends her love to the whole household. She is going to write in a day or two—as soon as we are a little settled.

Give us some news—good, if you can.

Ever yours

Jph. Conrad

The fine affectionate note is continued in Conrad's next letters:

17.3.98

My dear Mrs. Crane

You are both awfully good to me. The only reason why I would hesitate to accept your kind proposal is that I am afraid the company of a wretched creature like me *wont* do any good to Stephen, who is an artist and therefore responsive to outside moods. Now my mood is unhealthy; and I would rather forbear seeing Stephen all my life—(notwithstanding my affection for the man and admiration for the artist)—than bring a deteriorating element into his existence. You, knowing him better than any one, may tell best whether my fear is justified.

However for this time I am inclined to be selfish and say yes. I haven't yet heard from the Blackwood man. I instructed him to write direct to Stephen about the Saturday lunch business. We shall no doubt both get a letter tomorrow (Friday). If *yes* we shall meet where he appoints. If *not* then perhaps Stephen would wire to me on Saturday—as early as possible.

Wife and Dolly send their love to all, and I am dear Mrs. Crane always most faithfully your

Jph. Conrad

Tuesday

Dear Mrs. Crane

I am sorry to say I am not well enough to keep Stephen's engagement for Saturday evening. It is nervous trouble and the doctor advises me to keep very quiet. I think I ought to follow his advice. A dinner in town means sleeping in town and I simply don't feel equal to it. I hope Stephen won't be angry—but really I do not feel at all well. I am writing today to Meldrum saying that Stephen would like to

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meet Mr. Blackwood if it can be managed on Saturday next. If the thing is arranged I shall try to come up on that day for the lunch, but must get home in the afternoon.

I am so glad Stephen is writing; it consoles me from my own inability to work. I haven't written three pages since I left you. I simply *can't.* I am like a man under a fiendish spell cast over the power of thinking.

My wife and Dolly send their love to you all. Believe me dear Mrs. Crane Your faithful and affectionate servant

Joseph Conrad

24th March 98

Dear Mrs. Crane

Thanks for your letter. I am glad to hear Stephen is at work. I am not.

I shall be at Heinemann's a little before one. I think it's the best place for us to meet on Friday before going to feed at Old Blackwood's expense. The time of feeding is 1.30 and the locality Garrick Club.

Jessie and Dolly send their best love to you and Mrs. Rudie. The baby has set up a carriage and is so puffed up with pride that there is no bearing him. He behaved like an accomplished ruffian when Stephen was here and has hurt my feelings so much that we haven't been on speaking terms since.

I am, dear Mrs. Crane,

Most sincerely yours

Jph. Conrad

Then suddenly the accident happened. Havana became blood red. The Conquistador and a young stalwart stood up facing each other in rage. The news of war reached England, and the empire-builders watched with supercilious calm the rise of a new world power.

Crane cared nothing about the issues—it was a war, and action. He was restless now. He wanted to get back again to America. With a swiftness that belonged to him, and him alone, he betook himself to Conrad and together they rushed to the London offices of the publishers, trying to secure for Crane an amount of money that would carry him to the war front.

With his skilful pen Conrad tells the story of the "white-faced excitement" of Crane. Blackwood's agreed to carry on, and Crane promised to give them work to pay the debt. The truth was that he probably cared little, perhaps hoped that he would never return. There was a war ahead, perhaps a long one —and, well, England was very far away over there.

In payment he finally wrote *The Price of the Harness,* a tale which Conrad ever after felt was purchased with Crane's blood. But of course, that was not so; it was merely Conrad's fine nature rebelling against the fate that doomed Crane and used Conrad as an unconscious tool to guide his footsteps to Cuba. He would have gone in any case. "Nothing could have held him back. He was ready to swim the ocean."

But what of Cora? She remained, giving up Oxted and moving to Ireland and later to London. To her it was the first of her great moments of terror. She felt slipping from her hands the destiny that she had hoped was to be hers and Crane's in England.

The letters in the second instalment, next month, cover the period of Crane's prolonged stay in Cuba and New York, when Conrad cheered Cora in her despair over Stephen's health and over the rumors that circulated when he did not return to England; their efforts to raise money to send to him; Crane's arrival and the resumption of the friendship; the months at Brede Place, happy and busy in spite of declining health and financial worries but finally overshadowed by approaching death; and then the end, and the aftermath for Cora, left alone in England, where she stayed for more than a year.

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IS HUMANISM A RELIGION?

by G. K. Chesterton

I HAVE just been reading Mr. Norman Foerster's book on *American Criticism* and I hope it is no disrespect to the bulk of the book, a series of very thoughtful studies on American thinkers, if I say that the whole point of it is in the last chapter; which propounds a certain problem or challenge to modern thought. It is the problem of whether what he calls Humanism can satisfy humanity. Of his other topics it would be easy to talk forever. He generally says the right thing; he sometimes says the last word in that suggestive or provocative style that tempts somebody to say one word more. In my own estimate of his subjects, Whitman would be very much larger and Lowell very much smaller. About Emerson he seems both sensitive and just; and Emerson certainly had distinction; but just that dry sort of distinction to which I should always be afraid of being unfair.

A Puritan tried to be pagan and succeeded in being a pagan who hesitated about whether he ought to go and see a girl dancing. But all these things are stimulating but secondary to the question which I will take the liberty of attacking separately and attempting to answer seriously. I fear that answering it seriously must mean answering it personally. The question really is whether Humanism can perform all the functions of religion; and I cannot but regard it in relation to my own religion. It is only just to say that Humanism is quite different from Humanitarianism. It means, as explained here, a very right realization that modern science and organization are in a sense only too natural. They herd us like the beasts along lines of heredity or tribal doom; they melt us into the mud of materialism or sink us in the sea of subconsciousness. We need a rally of the really *human* things; will which is morals, memory which is tradition, culture which is the mental thrift of our fathers. Nevertheless, my first duty is to answer the question put to me; and I must answer it in the negative.

I do not believe that Humanism can be a complete substitute for Superhumanism. I do not believe it because of a certain truth, to me so concrete as to be called a fact. I know it sounds very like something that has often been said in conventional or superficial apologetics. But I do not mean it in that vague sense; so far from inheriting it as a convention, I have rather recently collided with it as a discovery. I have realized it relatively late in life, and realized that it is indeed the whole story and moral of my own lifetime. But even a few years ago, when most of my moral and religious views were pretty finally formed, I should not have seen it quite sharply and clearly; as I see it now.

The fact is this: that the modern world, with its modern movements, is living on its Catholic capital. It is using, and using up, the truths that remain to it out of the old treasury of Christendom; including, of course, many truths known to pagan antiquity but

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crystallized in Christendom. But it is *not* really starting new enthusiasms of its own. The novelty is a matter of names and labels, like modern advertisement; in almost every other way the novelty is merely negative. It is not starting fresh things that it can really carry on far into the future. On the contrary, it is picking up old things that it cannot carry on at all. For these are the two marks of modern moral ideals. First, that they were borrowed or snatched out of ancient or mediæval hands. Second, that they wither very quickly in modern hands. That is, very briefly, the thesis I maintain; and it so happens that the book called *American Criticism* might almost have been meant for a textbook to prove my point.

I will begin with a particular example with which the book also deals. My whole youth was filled, as with a sunrise, with the glory of Walt Whitman. He seemed to me something like a crowd turned to a giant, or like Adam the First Man. It thrilled me to hear of somebody who had heard of somebody, who saw him in the street; it was as if Christ were still alive. I did not care about whether his unmetrical poetry were a wise form or no, any more than whether a true Gospel of Jesus were scrawled on parchment or stone. I never had a hint of the evil some enemies have attributed to him; if it was there, it was not there for me. What I saluted was a new equality, which was not a dull levelling but an enthusiastic lifting; a shouting exultation in the mere fact that men were men. Real men were greater than unreal gods; and each remained as mystic and majestic as a god, while he became as frank and comforting as a comrade. The point can be put most compactly in one of Whitman's own phrases; he says somewhere that old artists painted crowds, in which one head had a nimbus of gold-colored light; "but I paint hundreds of heads, but paint no head without its nimbus of gold-colored light". A glory was to cling about men as men; a mutual worship was to take the form of fellowship; and the least and lowest of men must be included in this fellowship; a hump-backed Negro half-wit, with one eye and homicidal mania, must not be painted without his nimbus of gold-colored light. This might seem only the final expansion of the movement begun a century before with Rousseau and the Revolutionists; and I was brought up to believe, and did believe, that the movement was the beginning of bigger and better things. But these were songs before sunrise; and there is no comparison between even sunrise and the sun. Whitman was brotherhood in broad daylight, showing endless varieties of radiant and wonderful creatures, all the more sacred for being solid. Shelley had adored Man, but Whitman adored Men. Every human face, every human feature, was a matter of mystical poetry, such as lit like chance torchlight, hitherto, a face here and there in the crowd. A king was a man treated as all men should be treated. A god was a man worshipped as all men should be worshipped. What could they do against a race of gods and a republic of kings; not verbally but veritably the New World?

Well . . . here is what Mr. Foerster says about the present position of the founder of the new world of democracy:

> Our present science lends little support to an inherent "dignity of man" or to his "perfectibility". It is wholly possible that the science of the future will lead us away from democracy towards some form of aristocracy. The millennial expectations that Whitman built upon science and democracy, we are now well aware, rested upon insecure foundations. . . The perfection of nature, the natural goodness of man, "the great pride of man in himself" offset with an emotional humanitarianism—these are the materials of a structure only slightly colored with modernity. His politics, his ethics, his religion belong to the past, even that facile "religiousness" which he hoped would suffuse and complete the work of science and democracy. . . In the essentials of his prophecy, Whitman, we must conclude, has been falsified by the event.

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This is a very moderate and fair statement; it would be easy to find the same thing in a much fiercer statement. Here is a monumental remark by Mr. H. L. Mencken:

> They [he means certain liberal or ex-liberal thinkers] have come to realize that the morons whom they sweated to save do not want to be saved, and are not worth saving.

That is the New Spirit, if there is any New Spirit. "I will make unconquerable cities, with their arms about each other's necks," cried Walt Whitman, "by the love of comrades, by the lifelong love of comrades." I like to think of the face of Mr. Mencken of Baltimore if some casual comrade from Pittsburgh tried to make him unconquerable by putting an arm around his neck. But the idea is dead for much less ferocious people than Mr. Mencken. It is dead in a man like Aldous Huxley, who complained recently of the "gratuitous" romancing of the old republican view of human nature. It is dead in the most humane and humorous of our recent critics. It is dead in so many wise and good men today, that I cannot help wondering whether, under modern conditions of his favorite "science", it would not be dead in Whitman himself.

It is not dead in me. It remains real for me, not by any merit of mine, but by the fact that this mystical idea, while it has evaporated as a mood, still exists as a creed. I am perfectly prepared to assert, as firmly as I should have asserted in my boyhood, that the humpbacked and half-witted Negro is decorated with a nimbus of gold-colored light. The truth is that Whitman's wild picture, or what he thought was a wild picture, is in fact a very old and orthodox picture. There are, as a matter of fact, any number of old pictures in which whole crowds are crowned with haloes, to indicate that they have all attained Beatitude. But for Catholics it is a fundamental dogma of the Faith that all human beings, without any exception whatever, were specially made, were shaped and pointed like shining arrows, for the end of hitting the mark of Beatitude. It is true that the shafts are feathered with free will, and therefore throw the shadow of all the tragic possibilities of free will; and that the Church (having also been aware for ages of that other and darker side of truth, which the new sceptics have just discovered) does also draw attention to the darkness of that potential tragedy. But that does not make any difference to the gloriousness of the potential glory. In one aspect it is even a part of it; since the freedom is itself a glory. In that sense, they would still wear their haloes even in hell.

But the point is that anyone believing that all these beings were made to be blessed, and multitudes of them probably well on their way to be blessed, really has a sound philosophic reason for regarding them all as radiant and wonderful creatures, or seeing all their heads in haloes. That conviction does make every human face, every human feature, a matter of mystical poetry. But it is not at all like modern poetry. The most modern of modern poetry is not the poetry of reception but of rejection, or rather of repulsion. The spirit that inhabits the most recent work might be called a fury of fastidiousness. The new man of letters does not get his effect by saying that for him a humpbacked Negro has a halo. He gets his effect by saying that, just as he was about to embrace finally the fairest of women, he was nauseated by a pimple above her eyebrow or a stain of grease on her left thumb. Whitman tried to prove that dirty things were really clean, as when he glorified manure as the matrix of the purity of grass. His followers in free verse try to prove that clean things are really dirty; to suggest something leprous and loathsome about the thick whiteness of milk, or something prickly and plague-stricken about the unaccountable growth of hair. In short, the whole mood has changed, as a matter of poetry. But it has not changed as a matter of theology; and that is the argument for having an unchanging theology. The Catholic

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theology has nothing to do with democracy, for or against, in the sense of a machinery of voting or a criticism of particular political privileges. It is not committed to support what Whitman said for democracy, or even what Jefferson or Lincoln said for democracy. But it is absolutely committed to contradict what Mr. Mencken says against democracy. There will be Diocletian persecutions, there will be Dominican crusades, there will be rending of all religious peace and compromise, or even the end of civilization and the world, before the Catholic Church will admit that one single moron, or one single man, "is not worth saving".

I have therefore found in my middle age this curious fact about the lesson of my life, and that of all my generation. We all grew up with a common conviction, lit by the flames of the literary genius of Rousseau, of Shelley, of Victor Hugo, finding its final flare-up and conflagration in the universalism of Walt Whitman. And we all took it for granted that all our descendants would take it for granted. I said the discovery of brotherhood seemed like the discovery of broad daylight; of something that men could never grow tired of. Yet even in my own short lifetime, men have already grown tired of it. We cannot now appeal to the love of equality as an *emotion*. We cannot now open a new book of poems, and expect it to be about the life-long love of comrades, or "Love, the beloved Republic, that feeds upon freedom and lives". We realize that in most men it has died, because it was a mood and not a doctrine. And we begin to wonder too late, in the wise fashion of the aged, how we could ever have expected it to last as a mood, if it was not strong enough to last as a doctrine. And we also begin to realize that all the real strength there was in it, which is the only strength that remains in it, was the original strength of the doctrine. What really happened was this: that the men of the Eighteenth Century, many of them in a just impatience with corrupt and cynical priests, turned on those priests and said in effect, "Well, I suppose you call yourselves Christians; so you can't actually *deny* that men are brothers or that it is our duty to help the poor". The very confidence of their challenge, the very ringing note in the revolutionary voice, came from the fact that the Christian reactionaries were in a false position as Christians. The democratic demand won because it seemed unanswerable. And it seemed unanswerable, not in the least because it is unanswerable, but because even decadent Christians dared not give the answer. Mr. H. L. Mencken will always be happy to oblige with the answer.

Now it was just here that, for me, the business began to be odd and interesting. For, looking back on older religious crises, I seem to see a certain coincidence; or rather a set of things too coincident to be called a coincidence. After all, when I come to think of it, all the other revolts against the Church, before the Revolution and especially since the Reformation, had told the same strange story. Every great heretic had always exhibited three remarkable characteristics in combination. First, he picked out some mystical idea. Second, he used that one mystical idea against all the other mystical ideas. Third (and most singular), he seems generally to have had no notion that his own favorite mystical idea was a mystical idea, at least in the sense of a mysterious or dubious or dogmatic idea. With a queer uncanny innocence, he seems always to have taken this one thing for granted. He assumed it to be unassailable, even when he was using it to assail all sorts of similar things. The most popular and obvious example is the Bible. To an impartial pagan or sceptical observer, it must always seem the strangest story in the world, that men, rushing in to wreck a temple, overturning the altar and driving out the priest, found there certain sacred volumes inscribed "Psalms" or "Gospels"; and (instead of throwing them on the fire with the rest), began to use them as infallible oracles rebuking all the other arrangements. If the sacred high

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altar was all wrong, why were the secondary sacred documents necessarily all right? If the priest had faked his Sacraments, why could he not have faked his Scriptures? Yet it was long before it even occurred, to those who brandished this one piece of Church furniture to break up all the other Church furniture, that anybody could be so profane as to examine this one fragment of furniture itself. People were quite surprised, and in some parts of the world are still surprised, that anybody should dare to do so.

Again, the Calvinists took the Catholic idea of the absolute knowledge and power of God; and treated it as a rocky irreducible truism so solid that anything could be built on it, however crushing or cruel. They were so confident in their logic, and its one first principle of predestination, that they tortured the intellect and imagination with dreadful deductions about God, that seemed to turn Him into a demon. But it never seems to have struck them that somebody might suddenly say that he did not believe in the demon. They were quite surprised when people called "infidels" here and there began to say it. They had assumed the Divine foreknowledge as so fixed, that it must, if necessary, fulfill itself by destroying the Divine mercy. They never thought anybody would deny the knowledge exactly as they denied the mercy. Then came Wesley and the reaction against Calvinism; and Evangelicals seized on the quite Catholic idea that mankind has a sense of sin; and they wandered about offering everybody release from his mysterious burden of sin. It is a proverb, and almost a joke, that they address a stranger in the street and offer to relax his secret agony of sin. But it seldom seemed to strike them, until much later, that the man in the street might possibly answer that he did not want to be saved from sin, any more than from spotted fever or St. Vitus' dance; because these things were not in fact causing him any suffering at all. They, in their turn, were quite surprised when the result of Rousseau and the revolutionary optimism began to express itself in men claiming a purely human happiness and dignity; a contentment with the comradeship of their kind; ending with the happy yawp of Whitman that he would not "lie awake and weep for his sins".

Now the plain truth is that Shelley and Whitman and the revolutionary optimists were themselves doing exactly the same thing, all over again. They also, though less consciously because of the chaos of their times, had really taken out of the old Catholic tradition one particular transcendental idea; the idea that there is a spiritual dignity in man as man, and a universal duty to love men as men. And they acted in exactly the same extraordinary fashion as their prototypes, the Wesleyans and the Calvinists. They took it for granted that this spiritual idea was absolutely self-evident like the sun and moon; that nobody could ever destroy that, though in the name of it they destroyed everything else. They perpetually hammered away at their human divinity and human dignity, and inevitable love for all human beings; as if these things were naked, natural facts. And now they are quite surprised, when new and restless realists suddenly explode, and begin to say that a pork-butcher with red whiskers and a wart on his nose does not strike them as particularly divine or dignified, that they are not conscious of the smallest sincere impulse to love him, that they could not love him if they tried, or that they do not recognize any particular obligation to try.

I do not therefore believe that Humanism and Religion are rivals on equal terms. I believe it is a rivalry between the pools and the fountain; or between the firebrands and the fire. Each of these old intellectuals snatched one firebrand out of the undying fire; but the point is that though he waved the torch to burn down half the world, the torch really went out very soon. The Puritans did not really perpetuate their sublime exultation in helplessness; they only made it

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unpopular. We did not go on indefinitely looking at the Brooklyn crowds with the eye of Whitman; we have come with singular rapidity to regard them with the eye of Dreiser.

In short, I distrust spiritual experiments outside the central spiritual tradition for the simple reason that I think they do not last, even if they manage to spread. At the most they stand for one generation; at the commonest for one fashion; at the lowest for one clique. I do not think they have the secret of continuity; certainly not of corporate continuity. For an antiquated, doddering old democrat like myself may be excused for attaching some slight importance to that last question; that of covering the common life of mankind. How many Humanists are there supposed to be among the inferior crowd of human beings? Are there to be, for instance, no more than there were Greek philosophers in an ordinary rabble of jolly pagan polytheistic Greeks? Are there to be no more than there were men concentrated on the Culture of Matthew Arnold, among the mobs who followed Cardinal Manning or General Booth? I do not in the least intend to sneer at Humanism; I think I understand the intellectual distinction it draws, and I have tried to understand it in a spirit of humility; but I feel a faint interest in how many people out of the battered and bewildered human race are actually expected to understand it. And I ask with a certain personal interest; for there are three hundred million people in the world who accept the mysteries that I accept and live by the faith I hold. I really want to know whether it is anticipated that there will be three hundred million Humanists in Humanity. The sanguine may say that Humanism will be the religion of the next generation, just as Comte said that Humanity would be the God of the next generation. And the question is what will be the religion of the next generation after that, or all the other generations (as a certain ancient promise ran) even unto the end of the world.

Humanism, in Mr. Foerster's sense, has one very wise and worthy character. It is really trying to pick up the pieces; that is, to pick up all the pieces. All that was done before was first blind destruction and then random and scrappy selection; as if boys had broken up a stained-glass window and then made a few scraps into colored spectacles, the rose-colored spectacles of the republican or the green or yellow spectacles of the pessimist and the decadent. But Humanism as here professed will stoop to gather all it can; for instance, it is great enough to stoop and pick up the jewel of humility. Mr. Foerster does understand, as the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries did not understand, the case for humility. Matthew Arnold, who made something of the same stand for what he called Culture in the mid-Nineteenth Century, attempted something of the same preservation of chastity; which he would call, in a rather irritating manner, "pureness". But before we call either Culture or Humanism a substitute for religion, there is a very plain question that can be asked in the form of a very homely metaphor. Humanism may try to pick up the pieces; but can it stick them together?

Where is the *cement* which made religion corporate and popular, which can prevent it falling to pieces in a débris of individualistic tastes and degrees? What is to prevent one Humanist wanting chastity without humility, and another, humility without chastity, and another, truth or beauty without either? The problem of an enduring ethic and culture consists in finding an arrangement of the pieces by which they remain related, as do the stones arranged in an arch. And I know only one scheme that has thus proved its solidity, bestriding lands and ages with its gigantic arches, and carrying everywhere the high power of baptism upon an aqueduct of Rome.

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FOUR EPITAPHS

by Mark Van Doren

FOR TWO MEN

When these were idle shouting boys
Their mouths could make an equal noise.

When these were young and earnest men
One managed all the talking then.

When he grew famous he forgot
The other one that here doth rot.

But which is now the louder dust
The eyeless worms have not discussed.

FOR TWO BROTHERS

Let no man say that either mind
Heard willingly the scythe behind.

The edge was on them ere they knew,
With that undone which words could do,

And now is done upon a stone
That time has not come back and mown.

Until it tumbles, brother and brother
Understand they loved each other.

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FOR A NAMELESS WOMAN

Here lies a lady who would not wed
Because a hundred husbands bled.

Here lies the mistress of the shelves
Whereon they medicined themselves.

Here lies the keeper of the cloth
Of courage and of mercy both.

Here she lies, her duty done,
With arms around oblivion.

FOR A MIGHTY WOMAN

Underneath this tender green
Lie all the bones that spoke so loud:
The virgin trumpets of a queen,
Till they were folded in a shroud.
Now that she is deeply dead,
They are pressed and quieted.

No hurtful arm of any man
Laid sleep across them while they lived.
She was free, and so she ran
With peace beyond her, fugitived.
At any ache within the flesh
She warred aloud and stamped afresh.

The bones were mighty in their day;
But then virginity must die.
For all of these there was the clay
To kiss them once and let them lie.
Only with the final wound
Were these hungry trumpets tuned.

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BRET HARTE AS A PARODIST

WITH A NOTE ON NATIONALISM IN LITERATURE

by Albert Jay Nock

In general, probably, when all considerations are duly balanced, it may be said that nationalism is a bad thing for literature. When a nation becomes "great"—that is, when it begins to cut a big figure in industry and trade—it usually begins to feel that it must have a great art to match. It must have a great literature, great poetry, great music, great painting. If it has not already got them it must either valiantly pretend that what it has got is great or else bend its energies to a mechanical sort of improvisation in greatness. For example, in the last century, when Germany became a great world power in the political and economic sense, she felt the imperious need of a great literature; and (apart from scientific and philosophic literature) not having it, she set to work resolutely to glorify what she had and made a rather unconvincing job of it. To the mind unprepossessed by German nationalism, German literature, with the exceptions noted, has not been successfully recommended by the nationalist appraisal. A single illustration will suffice. In her rapid progress towards industrial, commercial and political eminence, Germany felt the appropriateness of having an eminent epic poem to correspond; so she took the *Nibelungenlied,* inflated her own critical estimate of it considerably, and put it before the attention of the rest of the world. She already possessed great music, music universally acknowledged as of the very first order; and her music in the person of Richard Wagner went out to service of the nationalist spirit in the bolstering up and exploitation of the *Nibelungenlied* as one of the world's great epics. Even with the aid of this powerful auxiliary, the attempt failed. The world did not accept Germany's critical estimate even when that estimate bore the stamp of this adventitious, but highly persuasive, recommendation. It remained fully appreciative, fully disposed to give generous credit and admiration where they were due —no one can pretend that it did not—but fully aware that the *Nibelungenlied* is not a great epic poem, and that no effort of nationalist imagination can make it so. Even at that, the world's judgment was happy to make a differentiation in favor of a certain temperamental partiality, as when someone told a French critic that Béranger was not really a great poet, and the Frenchman replied, "True, he is not; but *for us,* he is". Nothing can be said against the legitimacy and soundness of this view; but the nationalist spirit is usually not content to regard the matter in this objective fashion. It is dissatisfied with anything short of a general consent to the validity of its own estimate.

The nationalist spirit in the United States took an opposite course. When we became a world power, in the modern sense, and began to feel the appropriateness of having a great literature to correspond, our tendency

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was rather to slight the merits of such literature as we already had, and to magnify the prospects of what we were going to produce. The tacit assumption of our nationalism was that the great American novel, drama, poem, had not yet been written, but that we were "going strong", very strong indeed, and that at any moment now they might be expected. In fact, every publisher was sure he had them already on the press, and felt no false modesty about proclaiming his certainty; while reviewers took their cue from publishers and backed up their pretensions with columns of resonant and stereotyped fustian. So far did all this extravagance go, as we are all aware, that book reviewing largely passed over from its own legitimate field into that of a kind of brummagem criticism. It developed an abominable glossary of its own by wresting to a special use such words as *intrigue, derive, arresting, vibrant, vital*—we all know them; and the joint efforts of reviewer and publisher even made necessary the coinage of the special descriptive word, "blurb".

In short, in our manifestation of the nationalist spirit as compared, say, with Germany's, we are "forward-looking", and there is, of course, some virtue in that. It is a hopeful attitude, and hopefulness is exhilarating. It is a hospitable attitude, and hospitality is meritorious. Yet one may frankly doubt but what our course has been the worse for literature. After all, to go back to our illustration, the *Nibelungenlied* was, for the German, at least a fixed quantity, it was *there,* and considerable time had passed over its head. It was therefore possible for a German to put a deliberate discount on his nationalism, to take a disinterested view of his epic, and appraise it accordingly. He could do this, moreover, undistracted by the haunting uncertainty that seems to beset criticism when exercised under the influence of a forward-looking nationalism—the fear of taking *omne novum pro magnifico,* whether for better or for worse. Our type of nationalism keeps criticism sitting on the edge of the chair in impatience for the advent of something, it knows not what; and keeps it meanwhile continuously discomposed and dishevelled by a thunderous succession of false alarms.

In view of this, it has often occurred to me that serious criticism in this country would do well resolutely to break with our nationalism, and devote itself to re-appraising the literature produced, let us say, up to twenty years ago. It is at least debatable whether criticism has ever any proper business with contemporary literature. Goethe, the greatest of critics, thought not. "Don't read your fellow-strivers, fellow-workers," was his uncompromising word on the subject. It is noticeable, too, that other great critics show an instinct for going at contemporary literature with very long teeth. They seem instinctively to prefer letting time sift it a little before they take it up. Emerson's observation on this—"never read a book until it is at least a year old"—is well known, and it has the merit of sterling good sense in any circumstances; but in circumstances like ours, with the nationalist spirit marshalling us so rigorously the other way, it deserves unquestioning acceptance. By so doing, our criticism may rehabilitate itself and become respectable, and again it may not; but otherwise it surely never can. Serious criticism need not fear that our nationalism will go begging if deprived of its support. There will still be plenty of blurbs, plenty of the journalistic treatment of literature, plenty of forward-looking reviewers, plenty of literary log-rolling. Nationalism can very handily do without the serious critic's co-operation; and meanwhile the serious critic can devote himself undisturbed to the revamping and rehabilitation of his legitimate business which has long been in so bad a way as to be almost no business at all.

I have even thought that a literary publication might make a good feature out of some straight reviews of old books, reviews

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that should relate these books as strictly to the present as if they had just come off the press. This notion came up in my mind again the other day when I was re-reading Turgenev's *Fathers and Children* and remarking its apparent applicability to the spiritual circumstances of modern Russia, as far as I understand them. I should think that a critical review of that book would interest a reflective Russian considerably. For my own part, I should greatly like to read a straight group-review of John Hay's *Breadwinners,* Henry Adams's *Democracy* and Warner-Clemens's *The Gilded Age.* In another field, a competent reviewer could do something interesting with Ignatius Donnelly's *Atlantis.* In yet another, with Henry George's *Protection or Free Trade.* I am postulating, I repeat, that this reviewing should all be done from the standpoint of our own actual present circumstances, political, intellectual, social, spiritual, quite as if they were brand-new books by authors previously unknown. Similarly, in still another field, I should like to read an essay which should be not quite so much a group-review as a critical group-study of four minor—very minor—literary men of the last century, a study which should address itself to one question: *i. e.,* how is it that the literary ability of R. W. Gilder, E. S. Nadal, Charles DeKay and Maurice Francis Egan never came to more than it did? I can imagine the country-wide chorus of Homeric laughter that this question would raise if it were put to our professors of English literature, but on the other hand I can imagine a disinterested and capable critic looking into it and finding that it led him a long way in unsuspected directions and through a survey of unlooked-for fields.

A really fresh, unprepossessed eye turned back on the body of our literature for the sake of what it might find there, and not for purposes of nationalist exploitation or of fastening on something and giving it a spectacular run of revival, as in the case of Melville a few years ago, might succeed in turning up some matters of fairly conspicuous literary merit. For instance, it might be shown, I think, and shown to a very good and useful purpose, that our literature contains about the best parody ever written. I do not remember ever having seen the name of Bret Harte brought forward in this connection; it no doubt has been, but I think not regularly. Matthew Arnold remarked that parody is a vile art, as it may be, but he gave it full credit for being an art, as it undoubtedly is; and there is an advantage in knowing where uncommonly good specimens of any are to be found. It is with this advantage only, and not with shifting the incidence of nationalism, that criticism is concerned. Our interest is only in knowing where to get at the best specimens of an art, and one very bad effect of nationalism is, as in this case, that it stands in the way of this knowledge. A sound literary interest is not in Harte as an American or even as a parodist, but in parody as an art, and in the fact that the best examples of it are to be found in one place rather than another; and the business of criticism is to keep open an access to these examples, to show wherein their merit lies and what their practical uses are. Further, when this access is blocked by the interference of anything alien to a purely literary interest, such as the nationalist spirit, it is the business of criticism to take up arms against the encroachment.

In 1870 Harte wrote a thin little volume called *Condensed Novels,* made up of seventeen parodies of authors current at the time. The book got some popularity, enough to move him to try his hand at a second series which for a reason that I shall presently mention did not do so well as the first. A critic need not trouble himself with the second series; it is not particularly good; but the first series repays careful attention. I shall not offer a critical study of it here, for my point is not so much the establishment of Harte's place in literature, as the consideration of parody as an art and of Harte's

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claims as an artist. My point is rather to arouse the critic to the insidious influence of the nationalist spirit in keeping us so steadily looking forward that we lose track of past achievements which even nationalism itself might very well use for its own purposes. Nationalism's loss is of course not important; the important thing is that we all lose the benefit of a significant achievement by having our access to it virtually cut off, and that criticism should be prompt in showing where and what the interference is, and in doing all it can to restore our access.

Harte's superiority as a parodist lies, first, in the sound literary instinct that led him to choose great subjects for his parodies. I am speaking, and shall speak throughout, only of his first series. His second series failed because he ran out of great subjects, and tried to make shift with subjects that were really too slight for effective parody. Fifteen out of his seventeen subjects in the first series were the most eminent popular writers of his period: Dickens, Charlotte Brontë, Reade, Wilkie Collins, Disraeli, Lever, Bulwer-Lytton, Marryat and the author of *Guy Livingstone* were the British representatives; also an imaginary Braddon-Wood collaboration. France gave him Hugo and Dumas, and the United States gave him Cooper. Two of his subjects were not great literary figures by any means, but they were conspicuously associated with great social and political circumstances, and thus became themselves conspicuous, so Harte's instinct in choosing them still remained a sound one. Belle Boyd was a notable spy of the Confederacy, and her memoirs lent themselves well to parody, especially as they gave occasion for an incidental playful drive at the pachydermatous British journalist, G. A. Sala, against whom Matthew Arnold loosed such exquisite raillery in *Friendship's Garland*. T. S. Arthur was the old, original anti-saloon, anti-liquor, total-abstinence propagandist. He may, I think, be called the godfather of the movement which has culminated in the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act. One of his books, *Ten Nights in a Bar Room,* is a propagandist classic, and is still in print.

It is gratifying to notice that the eminent Victorian novelists are emerging somewhat from the smoke-screen of disparagement that has kept them pretty well out of view, especially in our academic circles, for the last twenty-five years. They cannot be said to have come into their own, precisely, for they are not read by us to any extent; our literary preoccupations with the present and the future are too exacting—and too muddling—to allow that. But there seems to be a fairly general consciousness that with due allowance made for certain broad streaks of obvious, one may almost say conventional, foible, the principal novelists of the Nineteenth Century, in its middle and later decades, were deuced whaling big people, as British slang might put it. Their literary faults and failings were as conspicuous and distinct as their excellences, and as persistent; they did not move along for great stretches of composition on a dead level of fair-to-middling. Hugo, for example, was about half the time genius, half the time charlatan, but he was equally great at both; he was all there in either character, and entirely, blissfully unselfconscious about his appearance in either character; one would say that he never really knew, at any given moment, which of the two he was assuming. This it is that gives to his *History of a Crime,* for instance, a quality possessed, I sincerely believe, by no other book on earth. One laughs most indecorously all the way through it; it is one of the funniest compositions ever penned by man; and yet, all the time one is laughing, one is possessed completely by immense indignation and outrage at what is described there and by immense respect for the genius that describes it.

Here, then, we have the ideal subject matter for parody, and Harte deals with it in a manner worthy of his subject. *Les Misérables,* the reader will remember, has a dozen

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lines of preface in which Hugo is charlatan complete and perfect, of purest ray serene. Let the reader peruse it carefully, and then turn to this, with which Harte prefaces his parody:

As long as there shall exist three paradoxes, a moral Frenchman, a religious atheist and a believing sceptic; so long, in fact, as booksellers shall wait—say twenty-five years—for a new gospel; so long as paper shall remain cheap and ink three *sous* a bottle; I have no hesitation in saying that such books as these are not utterly profitless.

Nothing could be better. Dickens's foibles and mannerisms, his mannerisms of mind as well as of style, are writ large and unselfconsciously on his pages; his weakness, as in the case of the other great Victorians, was set off most conspicuously against his strength, so that there could be no doubt or critical tergiversation about it. Harte, then, has this:

He sat alone in a gloomy library, listening to the wind that roared in the chimney. Around him novels and story-books were strewn thickly; in his lap he held one with its pages freshly cut, and turned the leaves wearily until his eyes rested upon a portrait in its frontispiece. And as the wind howled the more fiercely, and the darkness without fell blacker, a strange and fateful likeness to that portrait appeared above his chair and leaned upon his shoulder. The Haunted Man gazed at the portrait and sighed. The figure gazed at the portrait and sighed too.

"Here again?" said the Haunted Man.

"Here again," it repeated in a low voice.

"Another novel?"

"Another novel."

"The old story?"

"The old story."

"I see a child," said the Haunted Man, gazing from the pages of the book into the fire, "a most unnatural child, a model infant. It is prematurely old and philosophic. It dies in poverty to slow music. It dies surrounded by luxury to slow music. It dies with an accompaniment of golden water and rattling carts to slow music. Previous to its decease it makes a will; it repeats the Lord's Prayer, it kisses the 'boofer lady'. That child ——"

"Is mine," said the phantom.

"I see a good woman, undersized. I see several charming women, but they are all undersized. They are more or less imbecile and idiotic, but always fascinating and undersized. They wear coquettish caps and aprons. I observe that feminine virtue is invariably below the medium height, and that it is always simple and infantine. These women ——"

"Are mine."

"I see a haughty, proud and wicked lady. She is tall and queenly. I remark that all proud and wicked women are tall and queenly. That woman ——"

"Is mine," said the phantom, wringing its hands.

"I see several things continually impending. I observe that whenever an accident, a murder or death is about to happen, there is something in the furniture, in the locality, in the atmosphere, that foreshadows and suggests it years in advance. I cannot say that in real life I have noticed it; the perception of this surprising fact belongs ——"

"To me," said the phantom. The Haunted Man continued in a despairing tone:

"I see the influence of this in the magazines and daily papers. I see weak imitators rise up and enfeeble the world with senseless formula. I am getting tired of it. It won't do, Charles! it won't do," and the Haunted Man buried his head in his hands and groaned.

Comparing Harte's book with Sir Owen Seaman's little volume called *Borrowed Plumes,* we see clearly how Harte's instinct for the choice of great subjects stood by him. Sir Owen Seaman is a highly gifted parodist, but he simply had nothing to parody; the contemporary writers whom he parodied were too slight and insubstantial for anyone to parody with anything like a classic resulting. Harte's superiority comes out again in his keeping his work free from caricature. With all his keen discernment of weaknesses and absurdity, he never fails to communicate the sense that he is dealing with a great subject. In fact if I were trying to interest a modern student in these distinguished Victorians, I am not sure but that I would ap-

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proach the task by way of Harte's parodies. One who reads *Miss Mix,* Harte's parody on *Jane Eyre,* will find Miss Brontë's preposterous ineptitudes and absurdities faithfully reflected, but yet he will get the impression that somehow, nevertheless, *Jane Eyre* manages to be a highly considerable piece of work. In *The Dweller of the Threshold* one confronts all the pinchbeck writing, all the baroque transcendentalism; in *Lothaw* one confronts the tireless climber and insatiable toadeater; but one cannot quite get away from the conviction that as literary men, Disraeli and Lord Lytton were extremely respectable figures, notwithstanding. Here is Alexandre Dumas in the raw, at the conclusion of *The Ninety-nine Guardsmen:*

Suddenly the ladder was lifted two feet from below. This enabled the king to leap in the window. At the farther end of the apartment stood a young girl, with red hair and a lame leg. She was trembling with emotion.

"Louise!"

"The King!"

"Ah, my God, mademoiselle."

"Ah, my God, sire."

But a low knock at the door interrupted the lovers. The King uttered a cry of rage; Louise one of despair.

The door opened and d'Artagnan entered.

"Good-evening, sire," said the musketeer.

The King touched a bell. Porthos appeared in the doorway.

"Good-evening, sire."

"Arrest M. d'Artagnan."

Porthos looked at d'Artagnan and did not move.

The King almost turned purple with rage. He again touched the bell. Athos entered.

"Count, arrest Porthos and d'Artagnan."

The Count de la Fère glanced at Porthos and d'Artagnan, and smiled sweetly.

"Sacré! Where is Aramis?" said the King, violently.

"Here, sire," and Aramis entered.

"Arrest Athos, Porthos and d'Artagnan."

"Arrest yourself."

The King shuddered and turned pale. "Am I not King of France?"

"Assuredly, sire, but we are also severally Porthos, Aramis, d'Artagnan and Athos."

"Ah!" said the King.

"Yes, sire."

"What does this mean?"

"It means, your Majesty," said Aramis, stepping forward, "that your conduct as a married man is highly improper. I am an Abbé, and I object to these improprieties. My good friends here, d'Artagnan, Athos and Porthos, pure-minded young men, are terribly shocked. Observe, sire, how they blush!"

Athos, Porthos and d'Artagnan blushed.

"Ah," said the King, thoughtfully, "you teach me a lesson. You are devoted and noble young gentlemen, but your only weakness is your excessive modesty. From this moment I make you all marshals and dukes, with the exception of Aramis."

"And me, sire?" said Aramis.

"You shall be an archbishop."

The four friends looked up and then rushed into each other's arms. The King embraced Louise de la Vallière by way of keeping them company. A pause ensued. At last Athos spoke:

"Swear, my children, that next to yourselves, you will respect the King of France; and remember that 'forty years after' we will meet again."

Yes, this is indeed a very lifelike Dumas, and by no means a caricature. If I might reproduce the entire parody, I believe that with all its keen penetration it would still carry the conviction that Dumas was a valid and substantial literary quantity; that if one wished to cultivate Dumas, one might get a prepossessing and appetizing foretaste of him from the flavor of Harte's work.

As Harte avoided caricature, so also he avoided burlesque. He did not tell his own story or introduce his own literary notions or his own style. To make the distinction clear, one may place any specimen of his work beside the best and most delightful burlesque that ever has come my way, which is Thackeray's *Rowena and Rebecca.* There Thackeray had an idea of his own to work out, and an excellent one it was. He was dissatisfied with the novelist's habit of abandon-

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ing the hero and heroine at the marriage altar; there was a good deal of life to be lived after marriage, and some of it doubtless interesting. He was especially dissatisfied when Sir Walter Scott ended his novel with the marriage of Ivanhoe and Rowena, for he thought that Rowena was a very poor affair, not being good enough for Ivanhoe. "Must the Disinherited Knight, whose blood has been fired by the suns of Palestine, and whose heart has been warmed in the company of the tender and beautiful Rebecca, sit down contented for life by the side of such a frigid piece of propriety as that icy, faultless, prim, niminy-piminy Rowena? Forbid it fate, forbid it poetical justice!"

When one thinks of it, indeed, the question is natural and searching. So Thackeray set out on a sequel to Ivanhoe, to get the matter reasonably adjusted. But he does not imitate Scott; he tells his own story in his own style—and the story is captivating, the style is rare and rich. He has no concern with Sir Walter's mannerisms or with bringing Sir Walter at all before the reader's consciousness. Even by indirection. He deals, that is, in pure burlesque. Harte, on the other hand, is concerned exclusively with the author and does not engage the reader's mind upon any idea, story or style of his own; he deals in pure parody.

The foregoing, as I said, does not pretend to be a critical treatment of Harte in his capacity of parodist, but only a brief and partial intimation of a few points that would naturally come up in such a treatment of him, if one were ever made. One could easily establish him, I think, as the best of all parodists—one could do it, probably, by no more than an elaboration of the points of superiority that I have noted, and no doubt it is worth doing. I cite his case merely in support of a different contention. His *Condensed Novels* is something that we are likely to miss —we whose connection with literature is unprofessional—which most of us have missed, and in missing it have missed a good deal that is both interesting and formative. I believe our loss is largely due to our being too exclusively forward-looking in our survey of our literature; and this is due in great part to the fashion set by the nationalist spirit. My suggestion is, therefore, that criticism disregard flatly both the fashion and the spirit that sets it. Criticism's business is with a good thing, wherever found, and whether it has to look in one direction for it, or in another, is quite immaterial. Criticism's business distinctly is not to go out to service to nationalism or to heed the fashions that nationalism dictates for its own purposes; and if criticism is unconsciously falling in with these, it should feel with gratitude the wakening hand of anyone who has noticed its aberration.

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A LETTER TO A YOUNG GENTLEMAN WHO WISHES TO ENTER LITERATURE

by William McFee

My Dear Sir:

Your modest letter, requesting advice upon the momentous problem of your future career, gave me much pleasure and I put it aside until I could find the time to make a worthy reply. It gave me pleasure, not because you expressed a hope that I would "throw it away if I found no interest in it", but because you stated your difficulty concisely, you kept the letter within two hundred words, and you refrained from denouncing the present social order. In these circumstances I am glad to lend you any assistance in my power.

Of course a problem which is easily propounded in a few words is not to be solved in a paragraph. It will be necessary to carry the argument over to the next page, I am afraid, if I am to correct certain pardonable misconceptions in your letter.

In the first place, you say you write to me because, in a dedication to Christopher Morley, I advise anyone who wants to be a writer "to plunge into business". I am writing this letter down in the Republic of Honduras and I have not the book with me. I imagine you have not quoted me correctly. But for the sake of argument I shall assume that is what I said. You are in your last year at school, you are going to college and you are discussing the various careers open to you; but you have a decided leaning towards literature and you want to know why you shouldn't take this up rather than business because, in your own words, "To plunge into American business life is to say good-bye to all dreams of any other life".

Now this is a pretty hard saying, and I am far from convinced that you are right. I am well aware that you will find many business men who will add their testimony to yours and express extreme disillusion about their own way of life; but I hasten to warn you against such Job's comforters. It is a weakness of humanity to express dislike of one's own calling. For example, you suggest in your letter that when I praise business I am judging it from my own experience as a marine engineer. You say: "There are not many businesses as full of romance and adventure as marine engineering". I showed that sentence to one of the engineers of the ship on which I came down here, and he gave a guffaw. He then tapped his forehead significantly and suggested that you see a specialist. This does not mean that he has any intention of abandoning his business as an intolerable way of life. It merely means he is unable to share your idealistic conception of the way he earns his two hundred dollars a month. We all enjoyed that naïve remark in your letter, and, personally, I was not disposed to criticize you for thinking of a sea-going engineer as a romantic and adven-

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turous chap. Very often he is. Some of us in the China seas, recently, have had more than our fill of romance and adventure, with piracy and the sporadic growth of the Kuo-mintang in the fireroom over night.

No, my own criticism would be more likely directed towards your indictment of what you call "American business life" as a sort of spiritual Inferno over the entrance to which Dante's famous lines are, in your opinion, inscribed.

As I read your letter again I recall that in the last few days I have been meeting a number of business men and in none of their cases does your contention seem to hold good. I have been thirty miles into the bush to see a man who is digging a drainage canal and who lives with his wife and a police dog, not far from his steam-shovel, in two banana-cars which have been converted into a movable house. I have been in another direction to visit a man whose job is to catch snakes and extract their venom for the manufacture of an antitoxin serum which is marketed by a firm of druggists in the United States. I have had a conversation with a young gentleman who pilots a commercial airplane to and from the capitol over impenetrable jungles as regularly as the buses run to and from Boston and New York. I have met and talked with men who are struggling to discover the cure for diseases both of plants and men. And I have had a number of conversations with a banker who spent last summer in London studying economics and intends next year to go to Harvard to take a course in statistical science.

Now I can almost hear you protesting at this point, "Oh, yes, yes! But these are not what I mean by business men. What I am thinking of is the life of the office man in the United States today". And I can almost see your lips forming the worn-out and quite inadequate word, "Babbitt".

Well, in the first place I can assure you that none of the above mentioned men is a wealthy amateur. They are, in the very exact sense of the word, men of business. They are employed by organizations who must declare dividends or "go out of business", as we say. As for "Babbitts", you will find them in the engine-room and the ward-rooms of battleships. Above all you will find them in the writing business. But I shall deal with that popular fallacy in due course. I have something else to say first.

I mentioned these particular examples of American business activity with deliberate intent. I was aware, as soon as I read your letter, that you were under a misapprehension as to the nature of business. It is customary to think only of the selling side of business, as though a salesman would be of any use if he had nothing to sell. This infatuation with sales, to the exclusion of all the other departments of business activity, is an unfortunate but inevitable development of modern American industrialism. "The selling end of the game" tends to crowd out of the national consciousness both production and research. It also tends to inflate the self-importance of the sales force and to credit their department with almost mystical virtues. The phraseology of sales and marketing dominates our thought, so that we can avoid it only at the risk of being reckoned pedantic. Nevertheless it is important that you, before you close your mind to a career of business, understand clearly just what the word means.

It is perfectly true, of course, that a business career, carried out in a merchant's office, may be uncongenial and a waste of your time. It may strike you as a form of slavery. I dare say nearly every calling, every trade and profession, appears a form of slavery in the early years of apprenticeship. If you doubt my word, try going to sea as an engineer for a while! Or join the army. In spite of those alluring posters at the recruiting offices, you will find it neither adventurous nor romantic, at first.

But you say you have at present "a great distaste for business and an equally great

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inclination towards literature", although you have, you modestly add, no faith in your ability. And you hope I will explain my meaning and help you "from the throes of doubt".

Now one of the unfortunate features of this comparison of literature and business as careers is that in the former case you unconsciously think only of successful writers, while in the latter you are familiar with many obscure and uninspiring forms of business. The fact that many of our most successful authors enjoyed long periods of impecunious seclusion in no way clouds, for you, their present grandeur. And no matter how often I were to harp upon the existence of hundreds of authors who earn only a modest living, you will not be lured from your contemplation of the tremendous prizes of money, fame and prestige which may await you in the future. Do not imagine I am trying to dampen your ardor, or that I have any interest in steering you into business rather than into literature. I don't think there is much of that spirit among authors. A man who is in the trucking business, or in gasoline distribution, may have a desire to keep you out of those callings in his territory; but an author's pessimism is based, not so much on selfishness, as on a humane desire to prevent another failure! The fact is, there is a great measure of luck in making a living out of literature, and a consciousness of this factor makes us eager to show the beginner all the dark and dangerous aspects of the game. Authors are keenly aware of the fortuitous nature of their successes; they regard with a certain humorous envy the man established in a business or profession which possesses continuity and commercial stability. They feel that the kindest thing they can do for any young man is to warn him from the precarious business of writing. To that young man's energetic retort that he thinks he has the ability, they hastily agree that in *that* case, of course—but is he *quite* sure? But nobody save a conceited young ass can ever be quite sure of his own ability to succeed as a writer. And the practising authors, aware of this dangerous and fascinating quality of their trade and willing to take a chance for themselves for the sake of the prizes and the sport, are reluctant to take the responsibility of advising another. Even when they come upon some startling and precocious talent, their common sense warns them that perhaps that talent will be more durable if held in leash at the outset.

With regard to your own gloomy estimate of the business man's life, I am unable to agree that immersion in business precludes dreams of any other life. My experience of business men as employers and friends leads me to think that they have a full share of idealism and get much pleasure out of life apart from the conduct of affairs and the amassing of money. I know one man, in the same office since he left school at thirteen, who has a remarkably fine collection of manuscripts and rare books. I know a young banker whose hobby is first editions. I know a department-store owner with a weakness for fine prints, and a theatrical producer who, by reason of his love for beautiful books, has taken to publishing them. I know a business man connected with wholesale drugs, whose recreations are music and literature. If you say these men are exceptional, I agree; but intelligence and taste are exceptional in all walks of life, and it is not fair to blame business because many business men are not intelligent. I know one shipmaster who declines to have a single picture or book in his cabin because he dislikes pictures and never reads anything but the newspaper. But I know another shipmaster who has valuable etchings on his cabin panels, and yet another who writes regularly for the newspaper in his home port.

Coming now to your own "great inclination towards literature", I suppose that what you really want are sailing directions for reaching that desirable haven. I am not sure I can give them. I can only indicate the general course. As you are going to college in

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any case, I suggest you make no decision at present. In the meanwhile you can consult with advantage certain books, written by men better equipped than I to advise you. There is Arnold Bennett's *How to Become An Author*. There is *The Business of Writing* by Robert Cortes Holliday and A. Van Rensselaer. These will tell you dispassionately the general rules of the road. But you will find in the autobiographies and biographies of authors beyond anything else the inspiration a young man finds necessary to direct his ambition.

With regard to your question whether, in my opinion, "every person desirous of writing must necessarily be a long-haired, be-spectacled Greenwich Villager", I would say that you have been misinformed about Greenwich Villagers. While it is true that the Village houses a number of pseudo-artistic people, there are many bona fide authors and painters who find the cost of living there suited to their incomes. And if one were eager to criticize the ladies of Greenwich Village, I doubt that long hair can be held against them.

One more suggestion and I leave you to your fate. The next few years you should, above all, devote to reading. Read enormously. The capital of a word-merchant is his vocabulary. In the phrase of Mr. Kipling, "dredge the dictionary". Learn languages. Study art, history and theology. If superior people make fun of your attempts to extend your dominion over all knowledge, avoid them and go on reading. Some of it will, as they say, stick. Some of it will also sink in. In the most unexpected ways the varied information you are about to acquire will come to your hand to help you in your literary work. It will be a staff, but like Tannhäuser's it will burgeon with the flowers of fancy. Literature, since you have raised the question, is very much a matter of metaphor, or if you like, of images. On these the imagination feeds. Do not be misled by the notion that later on you will have more time. You will have less time. You will not be able to read, at forty, as you can read at twenty. At all costs you must read.

And even if, after due thought, you decide to take up business, this counsel still holds good. You will be a better business man if you are equipped with wide and diversified reading. It will be one of those decisions which we never regret and remain a source of inexhaustible pleasure.

William McFee

March, 1929.

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THE LANGUAGE OF DIPLOMACY

by John Carter

RUDYARD KIPLING once gave metrical warning to all and sundry to "beware my country when my country grows polite". The idea is an attractive one: that the British Foreign Office takes a bluff, brusque, hearty tone towards its friends, but to its foes it is courteous. That idea, unfortunately, is false. The British Foreign Office, like the Department of State, the Quai d'Orsay, the Wilhelmstrasse and the Palazzo Chigi, is invariably polite in its intercourse with other nations. For this reason diplomatic correspondence makes the least exhilarating of reading matter and at the same time the most fascinating subject of study.

It is not exhilarating because it is couched in formal and redundant phrases, sanctified by usage and couched in familiar terms; it is fascinating only when one begins to realize that the language of diplomacy—be it English, French, Italian or German—is a language all by itself, in which words and phrases have a conventional meaning absolutely at variance with what they say, and that not only is diplomatic language unique, but its grammar and idiom are as distinct from the vernacular as from classical literary form.

In the first place, diplomacy is peculiarly the language of the passive voice. A few active verbs linger on, like stunted scrub hardwood in a pine grove: "it is assumed", "this Government is constrained", "it might be inferred", and so on. In the second place, there is only one person in diplomatic grammar—the third. "His Majesty's Government confidently assumes that", "The Government of the United States believes that", "this Government understands". There is neither first nor second person in diplomacy. It is a language dealing with inanimate entities. Its grammar is further complicated by its overwhelming reliance upon the conditional mood. All diplomacy, properly speaking, is in the conditional mood. There is little past, present or future about it. Only when correspondence becomes heated does the language admit the finite tenses.

Take, for example, the American note of March 30, 1915, protesting to Great Britain against an arbitrary extension of the British blockade. A British order in Council had succinctly decreed that "every merchant vessel which sailed from her port of departure after the 1st March 1915 on her way to a port other than a German port, carrying goods with an enemy destination, or which are enemy property, may be required to discharge such goods in a British or allied port". This order had been communicated to the United States by the Foreign Office, which "recognized with sympathy the desire of the United States" to exercise its neutral rights, but nevertheless proposed to invade them.

The American protest contains the following expressions, selected well-nigh at random: "appear to menace", "would constitute", "this Government takes it for granted",

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"it is confidently assumed that", "it might be ready to admit that", "it can hardly be maintained that", "if the necessities of the case should seem to render", "this Government does not for a moment suppose that", "the United States takes it for granted", "this Government infers that"; and all "in the most friendly spirit", and in the light of "the peace and amity existing between the two nations". This, be it noted, was regarded as a vigorous protest.

Phrases become surcharged with a vital meaning which bears no relation to their legitimate content. In the language of diplomacy such phrases are myriad. Three only need be taken as examples: "does not understand", "grave consequences" and "unfriendly act". When a Government "does not understand" one of its envoys, it means that, in the opinion of the State Department or Foreign Office, that envoy has made a fool of himself. When a Government "does not understand" another Government's action, it means that it is good and angry. When a Government represents that "grave consequences" may follow a certain course of action, it means that it is getting ready to fight. When a Government speaks of another Government's "unfriendly act", it means war, *tout court*. For example, the Monroe Doctrine simply specifies that certain types of action by European Governments in the Western Hemisphere will be regarded as showing "an unfriendly disposition" towards the United States. Every diplomat, every foreign office and every major politician knows what these phrases connote. It was for that reason that the Japanese protest at the enactment of our immigration law, which suggested "grave consequences", so aroused the State Department and the Congress that the Gentleman's Agreement didn't have a Chinaman's chance of survival.

Seen in this light, the nature of the language of diplomacy emerges as the most precise and delicate means of presenting offensive thoughts without giving offense. By its very nature it must be inoffensive. Any nation has the right to refuse to accept any communication which is derogatory to the national dignity. For a diplomat even to entertain impolite thoughts in the privacy of his family is enough to cause international irritation. On August 20, 1915, Von Papen, the German military attaché at Washington, wrote to his wife and informed her that he always said "to these idiotic Yankees that they should shut their mouths". The letter was intercepted by the British Secret Service and shown to the Ambassador at London. Von Papen's recall was demanded and obtained on these grounds.

Within its peculiar limits, therefore, diplomatic speech becomes wonderfully eloquent. In general it may be assumed that the greater the protestation of admiration and friendship, the greater the tension. Take this communication, for example:

> Recalling the humane and enlightened attitude *hitherto* assumed by the Imperial German Government in matters of international right . . . having learned to recognize the German view and the German influence in the field of international obligations as always engaged upon the side of justice and humanity. . .

This exordium is not taken from a negotiation for one of the Bryan treaties, although signed by Bryan; it is from the first of the *Lusitania* notes, that of May 13, 1915, and goes on to state that the United States Government is "loath to believe—it cannot now bring itself to believe, etc.", "it feels it its duty" and concludes with the intimation that the United States will leave undone no word or act to protect its interests. This note was regarded as a threat to declare war on Germany.

Or take this: "The Imperial and Royal Government thoroughly agrees with the Washington Cabinet that even in war the sacred demands of humanity must be complied with". The Austrian Government in this instance is simply trying to evade the responsibility for the sinking of the *Ancona*

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by an Austrian submarine, with loss of life. Or observe the exquisite consideration of this communication from the London Foreign Office on January 7, 1915: "His Majesty's Government cordially concurs in the principle enunciated by the Government of the United States, that a belligerent, in dealing with trade between neutrals, should not interfere unless such interference is necessary to protect the belligerent's national safety, and then only to the extent to which this is necessary". Being in such agreement, therefore, His Majesty's Government "cannot believe that the Government of the United States would question the propriety of the action of His Majesty's Government in taking *suspected* cargoes to a prize court" (knowing very well that the Government of the United States would vociferously object to that little thing).

Perhaps the diplomatic classic is the recall of the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, Dumba, who had been caught fomenting strikes and sabotage in American munitions factories. The United States Government declared that "Mr. Dumba is no longer acceptable to the Government of the United States", and requested his recall, with "deep regret" and assurances of its desire "to continue the cordial and friendly relations which exist between the United States and Austria-Hungary". Under these pressing circumstances Mr. Dumba sent the following telegram to his Foreign Office: "I beg your excellency to recall me *on leave of absence* for personal report". Even the Chinese, adepts in the ancient art of face-saving, could hardly better that.

The last impression one gains of the diplomatic language is that, despite its heavy importations from the formalism of the Eighteenth Century (*par excellence, the* century of diplomacy), despite its cramped idiom and its horror of straightforward construction of thought, diplomatic language is most valuable in an age of democracy. Democracy tends towards the simplicity of the man-in-the-street and would be inclined to call a spade a spade, where the diplomat would refer to it as "apparently, an agricultural instrument". Democracies, as a result, tend to think very bluntly of each other. The Frenchman, for example, has incandescent views about our debt policy; the Englishman, likewise, is not over-nice in his opinion of our naval program; the American, conversely, may regard the French attitude on war debts and the English views of naval parity in terms which would call out the fire department. However, once the diplomats get hold of the views of the man in the Champs Elysées, Piccadilly Circus or Main Street, they are able, by the use of a few sensitive gradations in locution, a few omissions of traditional compliments, or an eager dwelling upon "amity" and "peaceful relations", to convey to the other Governments precisely what the man-in-the-street feels, without using a single word which that man would feel represented his opinion. A language which is capable of such precision within the essential limitations of the third person, the passive voice and the conditional mood is one deserving of greater attention from the philologists than it has yet received.

To the student of politics the language of diplomacy holds the secrets of international relationships, in which a single word or phrase—or a single omission—may give the key to an intricate and baffling problem. To the man-in-the-street, fortunately, it means almost nothing. If it did, the language of diplomacy would have to be changed. If the language of diplomacy should ever become familiar to the mass of people, diplomats know that international resentment would be stimulated and wars brought measurably nearer. It is, in fact, an official international code and, on second thought, belongs to cryptology rather than literature.

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THE HISTORY OF THEIR BOOKS

V. FANNIE HURST

by Arthur Bartlett Maurice

In the work of Fannie Hurst the story of the hour is the one now appearing serially and destined for publication in book form early in the autumn. Its theme is the chain store, reflecting the mad rush and the thousand and one complications and relations of contemporary American life. Its tragedy is the tyranny of things. For it Miss Hurst seems to have found the nearly perfect title, *Five and Ten,* a title that in its brevity and clearness strikes home in every town in everyone of the forty-eight states of the Union. Yet it is still only nearly perfect. Miss Hurst found that out recently when discussing with her English publisher the launching of the book in Great Britain. "What does *Five and Ten* mean?" asked the puzzled Englishman. It was explained to him. "But, I say," was the further protest, "we can't very well call it 'Four and Six.'"

In rough outline, at least, the writing career of Fannie Hurst is familiar to many thousands or rather tens of thousands. It is a stimulating story of intelligent effort and of courageous persistence, winning through to the goal despite repeated rebuffs and the resultant heartaches. To one periodical alone she is reputed to have sent twenty-six manuscripts without a single acceptance. In the study of the backgrounds for her future work she became an employee of a big New York department store, toiled as a scrubwoman, crossed the Atlantic in the steerage; in a word, to understand sympathetically the lives of the submerged, she herself shared their sorrows and simple pleasures.

Fannie Hurst began writing in the shadow of Honoré de Balzac. Many other writers have done the same. It is a laudable ambition; hitching the wagon to a star. In early youth she drenched herself in *The Human Comedy,* and the influence of that monumental structure is still perceptible in her work. An example of this is the care and trouble she takes in order to find the exact names for her principal characters. For instance, in the first draft of *A President Is Born*—and, incidentally, until almost the moment of publication the title of that book was "A President Has Been Born"—the name of the chief protagonist and his family was one that began with a Z. But it did not quite fit. She never believed in the name. It was obviously a synthetic name. It lacked something for a man who was to become President of the United States. Eventually David Schuyler came. But that was only the beginning. In order to be sure not to trespass on private lives or wound susceptibilities, she made a thorough study of the history of the Schuyler family, of Dutch origin, in the United States.

Even that precaution did not entirely achieve the end at which it aimed. *A President Is Born* brought Miss Hurst thousands of letters from readers who did not or would not understand; who claimed relationship with David Schuyler and offered proofs; who

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sought sources of information regarding a link in the chain of the presidential succession which baffled them and which they persisted in taking literally despite the fact that the copious footnotes of the book bristle with allusion to events of the 1940's, and to scientific achievements that are obviously of the future. The experience, in this case an evidence of a curious lack of perception on the part of readers, was not an unfamiliar one to Miss Hurst. In one of her short stories she pictured a purely imaginary character, calling him by some such name as Russell Bridges and endowing him with "wing-like ears". Within a short time she received six letters from six Russell Bridgeses, all acknowledging the "wing-like ears", and all protesting against the "personal portraiture". On another occasion, early in her writing life, she contributed a short story to *Reedy's Mirror,* of St. Louis, in which she described a confectionary shop in Twenty-third Street, New York, giving it a fantastic invented name. At the time she had never been to New York. Yet the tale brought her a letter of thanks for the publicity from the proprietor of a confectionary shop actually of the name and actually in Twenty-third Street, New York. Again, for *The Saturday Evening Post* she once wrote a story with the background in a great prison to which she gave no name. When she received the galley proof she found that the editors had called the prison Sing Sing. She had never been to Sing Sing. She went there to discover that she had described the institution as it is with what amounted to uncanny accuracy.

With Miss Hurst the title is often the great problem. When it is once found and finally found, it usually means that the work is well on its way. Occasionally a cherished title has been changed for editorial reasons. There was one, "Blood Money", which she felt so fitted the story that no other title was possible. It appeared, however, as *Other People's Shoes. Gaslight Sonatas* is one of her favorite titles. In *Appassionata,* which she now finds "somewhat sophomoric", title and story are closely linked. To her it conveyed a sensuousness, it summed up the mystery of those who, in a world apparently designed for human contact, sought the seclusion of monastery and nunnery. To drench herself in the spirit of the tale she made a long stay in Italy. *Humoresque* was a title that came quickly and surely. *Mannequin*—but that story, which she regards as a blunder, is a tender subject to Miss Hurst.

Sometimes a phrase from the body of the narrative carries the germ of the title. Sometimes a line from a poem. *She Walks in Beauty* is one of Miss Hurst's titles that came that way. *Roulette* was originally called "If" until she decided against following up the Kipling title, remote from it as her story was in form and substance. In the beginning *Lummox* was "Bertha". Then because it is her feeling that somehow a proper name is a lazy title, she renamed the book "Saga". That, she later and reluctantly decided, was rather pretentious and finally, after weeks, hit upon *Lummox* as best conveying the external "solidity and heft" of the central character.

Lummox is Miss Hurst's favorite book or, as she calls it, her "love child". It grew out of her study and sympathetic reaction to the countless thousands who live inarticulate lives, the little people of the world, the figures perceived cowering and shuddering in doorways, the subway ticket seller in his booth, the scrubwoman toiling in great office buildings in the hours of the night. *Lummox* was the search for the cathedral under the sea. Perhaps it was because it was so close to her that it proved so hard in the writing. For a time it went easily and rapidly, a kind of rocking in rhythm. Then, when the story was half done, the day came when the rocking horse would not begin. It was at the point of the tale where the seemingly simple act of the giving away of a concertina assumes far-reaching consequences. Facing them, Miss Hurst was lost; she did not know

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whither the people and events of her fancy were carrying her. She was moving in the dark. The *impasse* had been reached.

The book was put aside. There was a month of absolute idleness. Then, to forget it, she went to Columbia and took courses to prepare herself for an advanced degree. Two months later she went to Italy where, in a hill town, she remained for three months, treating herself as a mental invalid. There, one day, she found the solution. The rocking horse began again. To America and her desk she returned to fight through *Lummox* to its end.

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THE ANGLE OF ERROR

by Faith Compton Mackenzie

HALF-PAST five. Spiaggia was waking up. All through the glowing August afternoon, silence had brooded over this little city of tired bathers. Only the olive trees were alive with the regular scream of the cicala—the dry heart-beat of a summer day. Sometimes a dog had got up, barked and lain down again, exhausted. No other dog had even bothered to reply. The sacred siesta had not been desecrated, even by the English visitors, with their barbarous habit of noisy walks in the full sun. The heat had won, and everyone had retired behind jalousies to sleep through the burning hours.

Damiano Chilosà, being a Neapolitan and very tired, had gone frankly to bed, which he considered the coolest and most restful place. He was very tired because, besides trying to teach the Duchesse de Sans Souci to swim, he had cooked a wonderful picnic lunch for ten people. He knew that he would not be teaching duchesses to swim if he did not cook an occasional lunch or dinner. That was life: he accepted it. It was all very well to be a successful singer and to have the entrée into the houses of the Great on that account, but it was not enough for Damiano. He knew pretty well what the Great really thought about a poor devil of a singer, and Damiano did not regard himself as a poor devil of a singer. It was only by the merest chance that he was a singer at all. Just lack of means and a natural gift for singing had led him into what was the easiest profession going. He regarded himself, and wished to be regarded, as the Barone Chilosà, scion of one of the most ancient families in Italy.

The noble family of Chilosà had long been drained to its dregs, and Damiano found himself among the dregs. But family pride dies hard. The Palazzo Chilosà, only one of the many strongholds of this once eminent race, had gone through centuries of changing fortune, till now, as the Hotel Paradiso, it sheltered a large party of London's bright young people and a shining Parisian or two, who, by force of what they considered character, managed to keep the hotel to themselves.

It was in this society that Damiano wished to shine, and it was his fine culinary gift, as well as his delightful voice, that had captured the heart of the Elect. He imagined that the *barone* helped, but it really had no effect at all. They didn't care a bit what his family was, or whether he had any right to the title (which he hadn't), so long as he sang and cooked so divinely. They might have got tired of him if he had been able only to sing. There were few things they could concentrate on for more than ten minutes, but one of them was food, and that was where he came in. They demanded his presence at all their *al fresco* parties. His ravioli at midnight! His spaghetti at dawn! Food for the gods!

And he was such a dear—so obliging, always there when he was wanted to interpret

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and advise on boat-hiring, wine, barbers, villas and where the best exchange could be had. They were always sending for him, and he always went—but with dignity, as though he had just dropped in as one of themselves, not with any subserviency. *Per Dio,* no!

Damiano dressed leisurely and, opening his bedroom window, stepped out onto his little white terrace. It was cool there now; the sun had left its roof of dried broom. He sat down and looked out over the vineyard and olive orchard that he wished were his—over the orchard to the great mountain wearing the bloom of a purple plum against the dense blue sky.

"Un bel dì" he murmured. Never could a singer make, or at any rate keep, enough money to buy that orchard and possess that view. But—one fine day! He had hopes of Zio Alfredo, a bachelor uncle who was making a fortune in South America, and had been impressed by his nephew and his performance in *Traviata* at Buenos Aires. As to saving anything himself—it all went jingling through his fingers before ever he got home to Spiaggia. Not even could he afford to marry the poor Carolina, who had been waiting for him nearly fourteen years, her youth and looks ebbing away. No one understood why he persevered with this childhood's engagement to the simple peasant girl and no one, except Carolina herself, believed that he would ever marry her. Still, he never failed to visit her each day, whatever his social engagements, and his letters and presents came pouring in regularly when he was singing abroad.

"The *giovannott'* of yesterday has arrived."

A small boy like a bright brown bird made this announcement; Giannino, Damiano's only servant and his assistant at all the cooking parties. Swift and agile carrier of pots and pans, and fanner of obstinate *carbone* fires.

"He may enter."

The young man of yesterday came by appointment. He had been sent by a friend of Damiano's who had heard him somewhere near Naples amusing a few friends with his guitar. The result of yesterday's interview was satisfactory, and here he was for his first lesson.

He entered. He was about nineteen and of a godlike beauty. Of the best period, Fifth Century, B.C.

He wore, in spite of the heat, a closely fitting jacket of enormous check, much cut in at the waist after the fashion of the less informed Neapolitan tailors, white trousers, a red tie spotted white with a large horseshoe in the middle of it, a striped waistcoat and three diamond rings. His feet were shod in boots apparently made of bright yellow paper with shiny black welts and toes which were pointed. He wore no hat, and his mass of sable hair had been carefully trained to rise vertically a good half foot from his sloping brow. His appearance, in short, was the beau ideal of the Neapolitan *vuappo.**

Damiano had been saddened by this yesterday and hoped that he would be less gorgeous today but, instead, he wore yet another diamond ring. Yesterday there had been but two. Damiano understood that it was in his honor that all these hot clothes were worn and the extra ring signified grateful appreciation. "Some day perhaps I shall tell him. He has much to learn."

The lesson began. The voice of Marco Tale (pronounced Tarlay) rushed into his throat because he was nervous. He sang flat, grew very hot and nearly burst into tears. Yesterday he had brought his guitar and had sung with perfect musicality and a thrilling voice the Neapolitan songs he had known from childhood. This was quite different. He had never sung a scale in his life. Discipline was unknown either to his voice or himself. It was a painful hour and after such a fiasco he would not have been surprised to be told by the *barone* that he need not come again.

This did not happen, however. He was merely advised to arrange for lessons in the

* Wop, in American.

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theory of music with the Spiaggia organist and to come again tomorrow at the same time for another lesson.

"That is, if you are *appassionato;* if you wish to be a singer I will give you a lesson every day for a month and start you. But if not." He shrugged his shoulders.

"If you have faith in my voice, Signor Barone, I will work day and night. Today I sang like a dog and feared you would *buttarmi via.*"

"Yes; you did sing like a dog, and I am glad to know that you are aware of it. But I shall not 'throw you out'. I understand enough, *figlio mio,* to know that never again will you sing so like a dog. You have the voice and temperament of a great artist, but you have much, very much" (with a glance he could not control at the coiffure and the rings) "to learn."

It was soon manifest that Marco, who came from a very poor home, had spent his all on the new clothes which had been bought expressly for the interview with Damiano, on which so much depended. For lodging and food there remained nothing to speak of. As soon as Damiano discovered this he cleared out a small cupboard, where Marco established himself with his belongings, which consisted of a few rags of peasant clothes, a metal comb, a bottle of pungent hair pomade and his guitar.

There was no happy mean between the peasant clothes and the garments which gave Damiano so much pain. So one of his own discarded flannel suits, a white shirt with turn-down collar and a pair of rope-soled shoes, such as everyone wore in the summer, transformed Marco from superficial vulgarity to distinction. Only on occasions he still wore his diamond rings.

"Why, my friend, do you wear those false diamond rings?"

"Because I cannot afford real ones," Marco replied simply.

Damiano held out his plump hand.

"This is the only ring for a man. You will find no Englishman of any breeding wears anything else."

A heavy signet ring was the only decoration. It bore the Chilosà crest, with the simple but pregnant motto, *"Per Bene".*

"Of course, you are not of noble family and have no coat of arms," Marco sadly assented. "Still, it is possible even for a commoner to wear a signet ring and that, believe me, is the only kind to wear."

The diamond rings disappeared. They were given to Giannino, who gave two of them to his girl, aged ten, who appreciated them very much; he kept one for himself for festas. They served, in fact, to heal the wounds of jealousy caused in Giannino's breast by the unknown *giovannott's* occupation of that cupboard. So they were not bought in vain.

Marco's slim brown hands went unadorned.

His education progressed. Not only was he advancing in the elements of musical theory and voice production with astonishing swiftness, but he was apprehending the finer shades of behavior, with the example of Damiano, that stickler for the correct thing, ever before him. He had, of course, good manners and address, as all Italians have, but he had to unlearn a number of customs to which he had been bred from infancy, such as spitting on the floor indoors and eating *maccheroni,* however skilfully, with his fingers. Damiano had stirred his social ambition. He saw him go out, perfectly dressed in clothes of English cut (they were made by Poole), to parties given by those *inglesi pazzi,* those mad English people, who, for all their mad behavior, were said to be the cream of English society. He longed to join them, to have a little "flirt" with one of those pretty blonde women who were so strangely thin, like matches. He strongly suspected that not only in their thinness could they be compared to matches.

Damiano forbade his meeting anyone for the present.

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"I shall know when you are ready to meet them. Till then you must not be seen by them. Mr. Adolphus Nerely is giving a select party in his garden when the moon is full. At that, I hope you will be ready to appear, singing Neapolitan songs with your guitar. I shall cook the supper. I shall not sing. I have already told Mr. Nerely that I have made a discovery, and he is anxious that you should appear at this party."

He did not tell Marco all that he had told Mr. Nerely, for fear he should become conceited. He was, so far, singularly free from this failing.

"Your hair you must really control better. I have already told you that it must be flat —flat. Such coiffures as yours are not seen in the houses of English gentlemen."

"My hair is a desperation" (he called it "dishperazione"). "I cannot keep it down."

"Pomade and more pomade and a handkerchief tied round while dressing. Enrico, the barber, shall attend to you before the party."

Stile inglese was preached at Marco from morning to night.

"The English are the only people who can dress. Next come the good Italians, but only because they have the intelligence to copy the English. In dress and bearing follow the English, but in little else. They have no manners, because they have no imagination and are without altruism. But the finest gentleman in the world, perhaps, is the Englishman who has made Italy his home. Mr. Adolphus Nerely is an example. True, he must have been born with unusual sensibility. A hater of sport, a lover of art. He began to build the Villa Glaucus when he was twenty-four. He is now fifty, and for years that house on the edge of the sea has been a temple of the arts. A man of wealth, he has never had to work, and his life has been spent in the collection of beautiful things and the friendship of artists. Observe him well."

Damiano was on his favorite subject. He puffed at the Havana cigar he had chosen with the fastidiousness of a connoisseur at the tobacconist's.

"None of your stinking Napolitani for me, and a Toscano is little better. For me always a Havana *del primo ordine,* which you do not find here. This miserable cabbage is the best in the shop."

The tobacconist, an old friend accustomed to Damiano's ways, had only laughed with good humor.

"The best we can do here, *Maestro,*" giving him a light. The *maestro* implied more respect than *barone,* which was a title not insisted upon by Damiano among his intimate friends for many reasons. Marco's Macedonia cigarette was lit with the same match, while he vowed to himself that never would he yield to the lure of the common Neapolitan cigar.

So Marco learned. As the moon waxed, his store of worldly wisdom grew and, by the time it was full and the night of Mr. Nerely's party had arrived, Damiano felt no misgivings about introducing his protégé to the distinguished company.

Marco wore a white silk shirt open at the throat and, to enhance his picturesque beauty, Damiano lent him a black Spanish cape which he immediately put on as though he had worn Spanish capes all his life. Together they walked down through shining olive groves, with Giannino behind, carrying the guitar and a bundle of freshly gathered herbs for Damiano's cooking. Marco was pale and thoughtful while Damiano nervously plied him with last injunctions as to behavior.

"Above all, be cool. Show no fear."

"I must admit that my heart is going tup, tup" (*tup, tup fa 'o core*).

"That is only right. So it is with all true artists. Courage! You will make a furore to-night."

Their arrival at the Villa Glaucus was the first sensation.

The villa was high and solitary above the sea, but Mr. Nerely and his guests were gathered on the spacious terrace of the foresteria,

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or guest house, where Damiano was to cook the supper. The foresteria was right down on the sea, which lapped the walls of the terrace in fine weather, and broke over it in a storm. This terrace was approached by a long and dignified series of steps, and it was as he walked down these that Marco was first observed by Mr. Nerely and his guests, who had just finished dancing to the delicious music made by three barbers and three tailors, expert performers upon the mandolin and guitar.

Damiano, who led the way, they recognized, but the strange figure in the cape, moving with slow young dignity, intrigued them.

"Signor Tale!"

Who was Signor Tale? Mr. Nerely, all in white, with snowy hair, drooping moustache and hawklike, aristocratic countenance, began immediately to present him. Damiano noticed with pride with what grace his pupil kissed the hand of the Duchesse de Sans Souci—just the flutter of the lips and, perhaps, the faint pressure of the hand which might or might not have been intentional.

The Duchesse de Sans Souci had the largest eyes in Europe and the smallest feet. She wore a Chinese coat and chiffon trousers gathered in at the ankles with gold bells which tinkled when she moved. Marco had never seen anything like her before, but he kept his head. He kissed the hands of all the ladies and warmed to his work. He did not have to speak much, as the English ladies, naturally, did not understand Italian, so he only had to look serious and interesting. His hair was smooth as a raven's wing, and his classic features were like carved ivory in the moonlight.

"My dear! I've never seen anything like it! . . . Look at the profile! . . . The slant of the eyes! . . . I'm all unhinged! . . . Too marvellous!"

"Is it right? Is it kind?" murmured someone from the shadows.

* * * * *

When the excitement of Marco's arrival had subsided, the barbers and tailors struck up again and Mr. Nerely took Damiano and his pupil into the foresteria and gave them some champagne. Marco was allowed only half a glass. "Till he has sung. After that . . ."

The host produced a large box of cigars.

"Ah, look, Marco! These are the cigars of cigars!" Damiano took one and fondled it between finger and thumb. "This is the kind you must smoke when you are a great singer. They are the best in the world."

Marco looked at the box.

"Corona Corona," he read. "What a beautiful name! That I shall never forget."

The few drops of unaccustomed champagne gave Marco the courage he needed. On the terrace he took his guitar and leaning against a pillar began to sing without a trace of nervousness. He opened with the hackneyed *O Sole Mio* and went on through *O Surdato 'nnammurato* to *Tu sola!* which he sang with tragic intensity. Everyone was enchanted, except one man, a husband who had been brought along, stupidly enough, and was always threatening to leave but, unfortunately, never did. He was heard to mutter:

"By Jove, you know, I think these foreign chaps rather overdo it, what?"

He was the strong, silent soldier type of Englishman to whom Italy and its inhabitants make no appeal. When everyone gathered round Marco after *Tu Sola!* he said:

"Damn dagoes, you know. All right to engage 'em to sing if you like that sort of thing, but—make pets of 'em—no. It doesn't do, my dear fellow. Believe me, I know. It doesn't do."

No one took the slightest notice of him.

Vicin' 'o mare
facimme l'amore
a core a core
pe ce spassa!

sang Marco, and the barbers and tailors were

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so carried away that they all sang it with him. The rosemary-scented air rang with rich Italian voices and the rhythmic twang of mandolins and guitars.

Damiano tore himself away from the scene of triumph to the foresteria, where his dishes awaited him under the watchful eyes of Giannino. It was even better than he had hoped. Marco's success was his own, and his good-natured face was radiant as he lifted the lid of the *pollo cacciatore* which was simmering over a gentle fire.

The strong, silent one disapproved of this supper mania. Cooking, he felt, should be done by servants and, certainly, not by greasy singers. The whole atmosphere of the party was deplorable, and he was really getting fed up with Italy and its exaggerated moonlight and silly stage effects. Thank God the moors were not far off.

The supper roused as many superlatives as Marco's s i n g i n g. The *maccheroni* were cooked five minutes beyond Damiano's regulation, in deference to British taste which, he understood, was brought up on macaroni pudding done to a pulp (and sweetened, too, if such a thing were to be believed). This concession was painful to the artist, but he had once heard an English guest whisper, "Not quite cooked, is it?" That was enough for him.

The *pollo cacciatore* was followed by an exquisite *crêpe Suzette,* which Damiano flapped about in champagne on a chafing-dish and tossed on to plates greedily extended. He could have gone on flapping them till dawn—no one had ever had enough.

Marco sang again after supper with more feeling and less voice, and Damiano was persuaded to give Tosti's *Luna d'Estate* and *Pecché?* which he sang as well as they could be sung, in spite of the excellent supper he had eaten. He was no exception to the rule that all really inspired cooks are greedy.

It was not till the east was rosy that Damiano and his pupil, both flushed with triumph, left the Villa Glaucus. Together they watched the sun's path of gold across the star-sapphire sea.

"A symbol!" cried Damiano. "Yours will be a golden path. The gods have given you many gifts."

"The best is your goodness to me, *caro Maestro,*" said Marco humbly. "How can I ever repay you for what you have done for me?"

Damiano waved this away.

"I should not have helped you if I had not known it was worth while."

Marco hesitated a moment, evidently wanting to say something.

"Well, what is it?"

"Maestro, I have longed to show in some way my appreciation of your goodness to me, and I have always been wondering how I can do it. I have no money. I cannot buy the wonderful present I should like to give you. But these I have for you."

From under his cape he produced a large handful of cigars.

They were Corona Coronas.

"How—how did you get those?" Damiano felt a creeping of the scalp as though his hair were beginning to stand on end.

"Oh, it was quite easy. When I went to fetch your watch from the kitchen. It was the work of a moment. No one saw me."

Damiano at first could only stand helpless, his underlip quivering.

"You are not pleased, *Maestro?* You do not like them?"

"Pleased!!!"

Then he found his tongue. There are no English equivalents for the phrases that poured from it. Enough that Marco shuddered and paled beneath them. When the first flood was exhausted—

"Ruin! Ruin! You have ruined me! I, Damiano, of the noble family of Chilosà, to be suspected of such a petty crime! Never, never can I show my face among decent people. What will they say? He will miss the cigars—I had shown I liked them—what can he think but that? Ah! That *antipatico* Eng-

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lishman who was there! 'Dagoes,' I heard him say. Dagoes! And now this! I am shamed before the world."

Marco was appalled by the effect upon his noble friend of what he considered a simple little act of friendship.

"I will take them back now," he said eagerly. "I will say I took them by mistake. Or I might even put them back without anyone knowing. I could creep down onto the terrace—they will be all in bed——"

Damiano seized him.

"Do not ever go near the place again. If they saw you they would think I had sent you for something else. *Dio mio, Dio mio!* Even if they do not suspect me, they will think it is either you or the little Giannino stealing for me. Leave me! Go, go—never let me see your face again!"

Marco fled, sobbing, and was lost among the olives.

Damiano Chilosà's social ambitions died that morning. This dreadful incident cut them off sharp as the stem of a flower is cut and wounded by a steel knife. Marco was one of the blooms that fell.

A strange series of coincidences combined to change completely the pattern of Damiano's life. First, the *inglesi pazzi* disappeared like gypsies in a night, leaving nothing behind but a few discarded bathing caps and one of the Sans Souci's famous beach shoes which were garnished with red and green silk seaweed to go with her bathing wrap of wide amber *ciré* ribbon. This shoe was presented to Damiano with a wink by the owner of the bathing establishment. He was not displeased by the implication of the wink, but put the shoe away in a drawer and tried to forget all about it.

The English party left without a word for Damiano, nor did he, in fact, ever hear from any of them again. This had a sinister significance for him, though it really meant nothing at all except that they had found someone else to do odd jobs for them. The strong, silent one escaped to the moors without a backward glance, and the rest changed partners and moved to the Lido, whose star was just beginning to rise or set, as you please.

Then Zio Alfredo died most unexpectedly, leaving Damiano quite a decent little fortune. He broke his singing contracts, bought the vineyard and olive orchard of his heart, married Carolina and settled down to a peaceful, domestic life, all in the space of three months. No one, not even Carolina, knew the true history of Marco's disappearance. The general opinion was that he had been captured by the *inglesi pazzi* and, indeed, there were persistent rumors that he had been seen bathing at the Lido. Whatever happened, Damiano has never seen him again, but he followed his career very closely.

Nothing but the loss of his voice or an accident to his face could have prevented the success of Marco Tale. As neither of these things happened, he is now the idol of the two Americas.

Last Christmas Damiano Chilosà sat on his terrace, gazing out at his orchard and his vineyard and away to the mountain that was like a damson against the blue winter sky. It was a mild and lovely Christmas day. Little Damiano, aged three, was blowing his new trumpet, his great brown eyes rolling with delight. Carolina was in the kitchen, where all good wives should be, preparing delicious food for Damiano's Christmas dinner. She had not wasted her fourteen years of waiting. She has never erred as to a leaf, a pinch or a minute, and now Damiano doesn't so much as put his head inside the kitchen door (unless, of course, a delay occurs).

Giannino is doing his military service, which bores him extremely, and his place in the Chilosà household is only being filled by a stop-gap.

The flesh is creeping over Damiano's bones like an oncoming tide. He heeds it not. Of

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what use is a figure to the owner of a vineyard and an olive orchard? The garments of Poole have long since passed onto the backs of slimmer friends. One has been dissected by Ferruccio, the tailor, to his own profit and the benefit of his clients.

Ferruccio, the tailor, and Enrico, the barber, friends of Damiano's boyhood, were coming to share the Chilosà Christmas dinner. He sat there, waiting for them, puffing at his cigar.

It was a Corona Corona.

He had taken it from an enormous box which had arrived that morning, free of duty, from America. A photograph had also arrived. It was inscribed in Italian: "To my beloved *Maestro* with the eternal gratitude and affection of Marco Tale".

There were the gay eyes, the sweet, serious mouth, the classic line, the hair like a raven's wing, unchanged. But there were, also, perfectly cut clothes, discreet collar and tie and, on the still slim hand that rested on the beautifully creased knee, one handsome signet ring.

"Ebbene," Damiano smiled serenely. "We have both learned. No harm done."

Little Damiano, having just discovered that the harder you blew the more noise you made, gave a piercing blast.

A delicious aroma was wafted up from the kitchen.

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PHASES OF FICTION

by Virginia Woolf

IN THREE PARTS: PART TWO

The Character-Mongers and Comedians

THE novels which make us live imaginatively, with the whole of the body as well as the mind, produce in us the physical sensations of heat and cold, noise and silence, one reason perhaps why we desire change and why our reactions to them vary so much at different times. Only, of course, the change must not be violent. It is rather that we need a new scene; a return to human faces; a sense of walls and towns about us, with their lights and their characters after the silence of the wind-blown heath.

After reading the romances of Scott and Stevenson and Mrs. Radcliffe, our eyes seem stretched, their sight a little blurred, as if they had been gazing into the distance and it would be a relief to turn for contrast to a strongly marked human face, to characters of extravagant force and character in keeping with our romantic mood. Such figures are most easily to be found in Dickens, of course, and particularly in *Bleak House* where, as Dickens said, "I have purposely dwelt upon the romantic side of familiar things". They are found there with peculiar aptness—for if the characters satisfy us by their eccentricity and vigor, London and the landscape of the Dedlocks' place at Chesney Wold are in the mood of the moor, only more luridly lit up and more sharply dark and bright because in Dickens the character-making power is so prodigious that the very houses and streets and fields are strongly featured in sympathy with the people. The character-making power is so prodigious, indeed, that it has little need to make use of observation, and a great part of the delight of Dickens lies in the sense we have of wantoning with human beings twice or ten times their natural size or smallness who retain only enough human likeness to make us refer their feelings very broadly, not to our own, but to those of odd figures seen casually through the half-opened doors of public houses, lounging on quays, slinking mysteriously down little alleys which lie about Holborn and the Law Courts. We enter at once into the spirit of exaggeration.

Who, in the course of a long life, has met Mr. Chadband or Mr. Turveydrop or Miss Elite? Who has met anybody who, whatever the day or the occasion, can be trusted to say the same phrase, to repeat the same action? This perpetual repetition has, of course, an enormous power to drive these characters home, to stabilize them. Mr. Vholes, with his three dear girls at home and his father to support in the Vale of Taunton, Mrs. Jellyby and the natives of Borrioboola-Gha, Mr. Turveydrop and his deportment, all serve as stationary points in the flow and confusion of the narrative; they have a decorative effect as if they were gargoyles carved, motionless,

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at the corner of a composition. Wherever we may have wandered, we shall come back and find them there. They uphold the extraordinary intricacy of the plot in whose confusion we are often sunk up to our lips. For it is impossible to imagine that the Jellybys and the Turveydrops are ever affected by human emotions or that their habitual routine is disturbed by the astonishing events which blow through the pages of the book, from so many quarters at the same time. Thus they have a force, a sublimity, which the slighter and more idiosyncratic characters miss.

After all, is not life itself, with its coincidences and its convolutions, astonishingly queer? "What connexion," Dickens himself exclaims, "can there have been between many people in the innumerable histories of this world, who, from opposite sides of great gulfs, have, nevertheless, been very curiously brought together!" One after another his characters come into being, called into existence by an eye which has only to glance into a room to take in every object, human or inanimate, that is there; by an eye which sees once and for all; which snatches at a woman's steel hair curlers, a pair of red-rimmed eyes, a white scar and makes them somehow reveal the essence of a character; an eye gluttonous, restless, insatiable, creating more than it can use. Thus, the prevailing impression is one of movement, of the endless ebb and flow of life round one or two stationary points.

Often we cease to worry about the plot and wander off down some strange avenue of suggestion stirred in this vast and mobile world by a casual movement, a word, a glance. "Still, very steadfastly and quietly walking towards it, a peaceful figure, too, in the landscape, went Mademoiselle Hortense, shoeless, through the wet grass." She goes and she leaves a strange wake of emotion behind her. Or, again, a door is flung open in the misty purlieus of London; there is Mr. Tulkinghorn's friend, who appears once and once only—"a man of the same mould and a lawyer too, who lived the same kind of life until he was seventy-five years old, and then, suddenly conceiving (as it is supposed) an impression that it was too monotonous, gave his gold watch to his hairdresser one summer evening, and walked leisurely home to the Temple, and hanged himself".

This sense that the meaning goes on after the words are spoken, that doors open and let us look through them, is full of romance. But romance in Dickens is impressed on us through characters, through extreme types of human beings, not through castles or banners, not through the violence of action, adventure or nature. Human faces, scowling, grinning, malignant, benevolent, are projected at us from every corner. Everything is unmitigated and extreme.

But at last, among all these characters who are so static and so extreme, we come upon one—Inspector Bucket, the detective—which is not, as the others are, of a piece, but made up of contrasts and discrepancies. The romantic power of the single-piece character is lost. For the character is no longer fixed and part of the design: it is in itself of interest. Its movements and changes compel us to watch it. We try to understand this many-sided man who has brushed his hair, which is thin, with a wet brush; who has breakfasted off chops and eggs; who has his bombastic, official side, yet with it combines, as we see when the mine is sprung, ability, conscience, even compassion—for all these qualities are displayed by turns in the astonishingly vivid account of the drive through the night and the storm, in pursuit of Esther's mother. If much more were added, so that Inspector Bucket drew more of our attention to him and diverted it from the story, we should begin with this new scale of values in our eyes to find the glaring opposites in use elsewhere too violent to be tolerable. But Dickens committed no such sin against his readers. He uses this clear-cut, many-faced figure to sharpen his final scenes and, then, letting Inspector Bucket of the detective force disappear, gathers the loose folds of the story into

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one prodigious armful and makes an end. But he has sharpened our curiosity and made us dissatisfied with the limitations and even with the exuberance of his genius. The scene becomes too elastic, too voluminous, too cloud-like in its contours. The very abundance of it tires us, as well as the impossibility of holding it all together. We are always straying down bypaths and into alleys where we lose our way and cannot remember where we were going.

Though the heart of Dickens burned with indignation for public wrongs, he lacked sensitiveness privately, so that his attempts at intimacy failed. His great figures are on too large a scale to fit nicely into each other. They do not interlock. They need company to show them off and action to bring out their humors. They are often out of touch with each other. In Tolstoy, in the scenes between Princess Marya and her father, the old Prince, the pressure of character upon character is never relaxed. The tension is perpetual, every nerve in the character is alive. It may be for this reason that Tolstoy is the greatest of novelists. In Dickens the characters are impressive in themselves but not in their personal relations. Often, indeed, when they talk to each other they are vapid in the extreme or sentimental beyond belief. One thinks of them as independent, existing forever, unchanged, like monoliths looking up into the sky. So it is that we begin to want something smaller, more intense, more intricate. Dickens has, himself, given us a taste of the pleasure we derive from looking curiously and intently into another character. He has made us instinctively reduce the size of the scene in proportion to the figure of a normal man, and now we seek this intensification, this reduction, carried out more perfectly and more completely, we shall find, in the novels of Jane Austen.

At once, when we open *Pride and Prejudice,* we are aware that the sentence has taken on a different character. Dickens, of course, at full stride is as free-paced and far-stretched as possible. But in comparison with this nervous style, how large-limbed and how loose. The sentence here runs like a knife, in and out, cutting a shape clear. It is done in a drawing-room. It is done by the use of dialogue. Half a dozen people come together after dinner and begin, as they so well might, to discuss letter-writing. Mr. Darcy writes slowly and "studies too much for words of four syllables". Mr. Bingley, on the other hand (for it is necessary that we should get to know them both and they can be quickest shown if they are opposed) "leaves out half his words and blots the rest". But such is only the first rough shaping that gives the outline of the face. We go on to define and distinguish. Bingley, says Darcy, is really boasting when he calls himself a careless letter-writer because he thinks the defect interesting. It was a boast when he told Mrs. Bennet that if he left Netherfield he would be gone in five minutes. And this little passage of analysis on Darcy's part, besides proving his astuteness and his cool observant temper, rouses Bingley to show us a vivacious picture of Darcy at home. "I don't know a more awful object than Darcy, on particular occasions, and in particular places; at his own house especially, and of a Sunday evening, when he has nothing to do."

So, by means of perfectly natural question and answer, everyone is defined and, as they talk, they become not only more clearly seen, but each stroke of the dialogue brings them together or moves them apart, so that the group is no longer casual but interlocked. The talk is not mere talk; it has an emotional intensity which gives it more than brilliance. Light, landscape—everything that lies outside the drawing-room is arranged to illumine it. Distances are made exact; arrangements accurate. It is one mile from Meryton; it is Sunday and not Monday. We want all suspicions and questions laid at rest. It is necessary that the characters should lie before us in as clear and quiet a light as possi-

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ble since every flicker and tremor is to be observed. Nothing happens, as things so often happen in Dickens, for its own oddity or curiosity but with relation to something else. No avenues of suggestion are opened up, no doors are suddenly flung wide; the ropes which tighten the structure, since they are all rooted in the heart, are so held firmly and tightly. For, in order to develop personal relations to the utmost, it is important to keep out of the range of the abstract, the impersonal; and to suggest that there is anything that lies outside men and women would be to cast the shadow of doubt upon the comedy of their relationships and its sufficiency. So with edged phrases where often one word, set against the current of the phrase, serves to fledge it (thus: "and whenever any of the cottagers were disposed to be quarrelsome, discontented, or *too poor*") we got down to the depths, for deep they are, for all their clarity.

But personal relations have limits, as Jane Austen seems to realize by stressing their comedy. Everything, she seems to say, has, if we could discover it, a reasonable summing up; and it is extremely amusing and interesting to see the efforts of people to upset the reasonable order, defeated as they invariably are. But if, complaining of the lack of poetry or the lack of tragedy, we are about to frame the familiar statement that this is a world which is too small to satisfy us, a prosaic world, a world of inches and blades of grass, we are brought to a pause by another impression which requires a moment further of analysis. Among all the elements which play upon us in reading fiction there has always been, though in different degrees, some voice, accent or temperament clearly heard, though behind the scenes of the book. "Trollope, the novelist, a big, blustering, spectacled, loud-voiced, hunting man"; Scott, the ruined country gentleman, whose very pigs trotted after him, so gracious was the sound of his voice —both come to us with the gesture of hosts, welcoming us, and we fall under the spell of their charm or the interest of their characters.

We cannot say this of Jane Austen, and her absence has the effect of making us detached from her work and of giving it, for all its sparkle and animation, a certain aloofness and completeness. Her genius compelled her to absent herself. So truthful, so clear, so sane a vision would not tolerate distraction, even if it came from her own claims, nor allow the actual experience of a transitory woman to color what should be unstained by personality. For this reason, then, though we may be less swayed by her, we are less dissatisfied. It may be the very idiosyncrasy of a writer that tires us of him. Jane Austen, who has so little that is peculiar, does not tire us, nor does she breed in us a desire for those writers whose method and style differ altogether from hers. Thus, instead of being urged as the last page is finished to start in search of something that contrasts and completes, we pause when we have read *Pride and Prejudice.*

The pause is the result of a satisfaction which turns our minds back upon what we have just read, rather than forward to something fresh. Satisfaction is, by its nature, removed from analysis, for the quality which satisfies us is the sum of many different parts, so that if we begin praising *Pride and Prejudice* for the qualities that compose it—its wit, its truth, its profound comic power—we shall still not praise it for the quality which is the sum of all these. At this point, then, the mind, brought to bay, escapes the dilemma and has recourse to images. We compare *Pride and Prejudice* to something else because, since satisfaction can be defined no further, all the mind can do is to make a likeness of the thing and, by giving it another shape, cherish the illusion that it is explaining it, whereas it is, in fact, only looking at it afresh. To say that *Pride and Prejudice* is like a shell, a gem, a crystal, whatever image we may choose, is to see the same thing under a different guise. Yet, perhaps, if we compare *Pride and Prejudice* to something concrete,

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it is because we are trying to express the sense we have in other novels imperfectly, here with distinctness, of a quality which is not in the story but above it, not in the things themselves but in their arrangement.

Pride and Prejudice, one says, has form; *Bleak House* has not. The eye (so active always in fiction) gives its own interpretation of impressions that the mind has been receiving in different terms. The mind has been conscious in *Pride and Prejudice* that things are said, for all their naturalness, with a purpose; one emotion has been contrasted with another; one scene has been short, the next long; so that all the time, instead of reading at random, without control, snatching at this and that, stressing one thing or another, as the mood takes us, we have been aware of check and stimulus, of spectral architecture built up behind the animation and variety of the scene. It is a quality so precise it is not to be found either in what is said or in what is done; that is, it escapes analysis. It is a quality, too, that is much at the mercy of fiction. Its control is invariably weak there, much weaker than in poetry or in drama because fiction runs so close to life the two are always coming into collision. That this architectural quality can be possessed by a novelist, Jane Austen proves. And she proves, too, that far from chilling the interest or withdrawing the attention from the characters, it seems on the contrary to focus it and add an extra pleasure to the book, a significance. It makes it seem that here is something good in itself, quite apart from our personal feelings.

Not to seek contrast but to start afresh—this is the impulse which urges us on after finishing *Pride and Prejudice.* We must make a fresh start altogether. Personal relations, we recall, have limits. In order to keep their edges sharp, the mysterious, the unknown, the accidental, the strange subside; their intervention would be confusing and distressing. The writer adopts an ironic attitude to her creatures, because she has denied them so many adventures and experiences. A suitable marriage is, after all, the upshot of all this coming together and drawing apart. A world which so often ends in a suitable marriage is not a world to wring one's hands over. On the contrary, it is a world about which we can be sarcastic; into which we can peer endlessly, as we fit the jagged pieces one into another. Thus, it is possible to ask not that her world shall be improved or altered (that our satisfaction forbids) but that another shall be struck off, whose constitution shall be different and shall allow of the other relations. People's relations shall be with God or nature. They shall think. They shall sit, like Dorothea Casaubon in *Middlemarch,* drawing plans for other people's houses; they shall suffer like Gissing's characters in solitude; they shall be alone. *Pride and Prejudice,* because it has such integrity of its own, never for an instant encroaches on other provinces and, thus, leaves them more clearly defined.

Nothing could be more complete than the difference between *Pride and Prejudice* and *Silas Marner.* Between us and the scene which was so near, so distinct, is now cast a shadow. Something intervenes. The character of Silas Marner is removed from us. It is held in relation to other men and his life compared with human life. This comparison is perpetually made and illustrated by somebody not implicit in the book but inside it, somebody who at once reveals herself as "I", so that there can be no doubt from the first that we are not going to get the relations of people together, but the spectacle of life so far as "I" can show it to us. "I" will do my best to illumine these particular examples of men and women with all the knowledge, all the reflections that "I" can offer you.

"I", we at once perceive, has access to many more experiences and reflections than can have come the way of the rustics themselves. She discovers what a simple weaver's emotions on leaving his native village are, by comparing them with those of other people. "People whose lives have been made various

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by learning, sometimes find it hard to keep a fast hold on their habitual views of life, on their faith in the Invisible . . ." It is the observer speaking and we are at once in communication with a grave mind—a mind which it is part of our business to understand. This, of course, darkens and thickens the atmosphere, for we see through so many temperaments; so many side lights from knowledge, from reflection, play upon what we see; often, even as we are watching the weaver, our minds circle round him and we observe him with an amusement, compassion or interest which it is impossible that he should feel himself.

Raveloe is not simply a town like Meryton now in existence with certain shops and assembly rooms; it has a past and therefore the present becomes fleeting, and we enjoy, among other things, the feeling that this is a world in process of change and decay, whose charm is due partly to the fact that it is past. Perhaps we compare it in our own minds with the England of today and the Napoleonic wars with those of our own time. All this, if it serves to enlarge the horizon, also makes the village and the people in it who are placed against so wide a view smaller and their impact on each other less sharp. The novelist who believes that personal relations are enough intensifies them and sharpens them and devotes his power to their investigation. But if the end of life is not to meet, to part, to love, to laugh, if we are at the mercy of other forces, some of them unknown, all of them beyond our power, the urgency of these meetings and partings is blurred and lessened. The edges of the coming together are blunted and the comedy tends to widen itself into a larger sphere and so to modulate into something melancholy, tolerant and perhaps resigned. George Eliot has removed herself too far from her characters to dissect them keenly or finely, but she has gained the use of her own mind upon these same characters. Jane Austen went in and out of her people's minds like the blood in their veins.

George Eliot has kept the engine of her clumsy and powerful mind at her own disposal. She can use it, when she has created enough matter to use it upon, freely. She can stop at any moment to reason out the motives of the mind that has created it. When Silas Marner discovers that his gold has been stolen, he has recourse to "that sort of refuge which always comes with the prostration of thought under an overpowering passion; it was that expectation of impossibilities, that belief in contradictory images, which is still distinct from madness, because it is capable of being dissipated by the external fact". Such analysis is unthinkable in Dickens or in Jane Austen. But it adds something to the character which the character lacked before. It makes us feel not only that the working of the mind is interesting but that we shall get a much truer and subtler understanding of what is actually said and done if we so observe it. We shall perceive that often an action has only a slight relation to a feeling and, thus, that the truth-tellers who are content to record accurately what is said and done are often ludicrously deceived and out in their estimate. In other directions there are changes. The use of dialogue is limited; for people can say very little directly. Much more can be said for them or about them by the writer himself. Then, the writer's mind, his knowledge, his skill, not merely the color of his temperament, become means for bringing out the disposition of the character and also for relating it to other times and places. There is thus revealed underneath a state of mind which often runs counter to the action and the speech.

It is in this direction that George Eliot turns her characters and her scenes. Shadows checker them. All sorts of influences of history, of time, of reflection play upon them. If we consult our own difficult and mixed emotions as we read, it becomes clear that we are fast moving out of the range of pure character-mongering, of comedy, into a far more dubious region.

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The Psychologists

Indeed, we have a strange sense of having left every world when we take up *What Maisie Knew;* of being without some support which, even if it impeded us in Dickens and George Eliot, upheld us and controlled us. The visual sense which has hitherto been so active, perpetually sketching fields and farmhouses and faces, seems now to fail or to use its powers to illumine the mind within, rather than the world without. Henry James has to find an equivalent for the processes of the mind, to make concrete a mental state. He says, she was "a ready vessel for bitterness, a deep little porcelain cup in which biting acids could be mixed". He is forever using this intellectual imagery. The usual supports, the props and struts of the conventions, expressed or observed by the writer, are removed. Everything seems aloof from interference, thrown open to discussion and light, though resting on no visible support. For the minds of which this world is composed seem oddly freed from the pressure of the old encumbrances and raised above the stress of circumstances.

Crises cannot be precipitated by any of the old devices which Dickens and George Eliot used. Murders, rapes, seductions, sudden deaths have no power over this high, aloof world. Here the people are the sport only of delicate influences: of thoughts that people think, but hardly state, about each other; of judgments which people whose time is unoccupied have leisure to devise and apply. In consequence, these characters seem held in a vacuum at a great move from the substantial, lumbering worlds of Dickens and George Eliot or from the precise crisscross of convention which metes out the world of Jane Austen. They live in a cocoon, spun from the finest shades of meaning, which a society, completely unoccupied by the business of getting its living, has time to spin round and about itself. Hence, we are at once conscious of using faculties hitherto dormant, ingenuity and skill, a mental nimbleness and dexterity such as serve to solve a puzzle ingeniously; our pleasure becomes split up, refined, its substance infinitely divided instead of being served to us in one lump.

Maisie, the little girl who is the bone of contention between two parents, each of them claiming her for six months, each of them finally marrying a second husband or wife, lies sunk beneath the depths of suggestion, hint and conjecture, so that she can only affect us very indirectly, each feeling of hers being deflected and reaching us after glancing off the mind of some other person. Therefore she rouses in us no simple and direct emotion. We always have time to watch it coming and to calculate its pathway, now to the right, now to the left. Cool, amused, intrigued, at every second trying to refine our senses still further and to marshal all that we have of sophisticated intelligence into one section of ourselves, we hang suspended over this aloof little world and watch with intellectual curiosity for the event.

In spite of the fact that our pleasure is less direct, less the result of feeling strongly in sympathy with some pleasure or sorrow, it has a fineness, a sweetness, which the more direct writers fail to give us. This comes in part from the fact that a thousand emotional veins and streaks are perceptible in this twilight or dawn which are lost in the full light of midday.

Besides this fineness and sweetness we get another pleasure which comes when the mind is freed from the perpetual demand of the novelist that we shall feel with his characters. By cutting off the responses which are called out in actual life, the novelist frees us to take delight, as we do when ill or travelling, in things in themselves. We can see the strangeness of them only when habit has ceased to immerse us in them, and we stand outside watching what has no power over us one way or the other. Then we see the mind at work; we are amused by its power to make patterns; by its power to bring out relations

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in things and disparities which are covered over when we are acting by habit or driven on by the ordinary impulses. It is a pleasure somewhat akin, perhaps, to the pleasure of mathematics or the pleasure of music. Only, of course, since the novelist is using men and women as his subjects, he is perpetually exciting feelings which are opposed to the impersonality of numbers and sound; he seems, in fact, to ignore and to repress their natural feelings, to be coercing them into a plan which we call with vague resentment "artificial" though it is probable that we are not so foolish as to resent artifice in art. Either through a feeling of timidity or prudery or through a lack of imaginative audacity, Henry James diminishes the interest and importance of his subject in order to bring about a symmetry which is dear to him. This his readers resent. We feel him there, as the suave showman, skilfully manipulating his characters; nipping, repressing; dexterously evading and ignoring, where a writer of greater depth or natural spirits would have taken the risk which his material imposes, let his sails blow full and so, perhaps, achieved symmetry and pattern, in themselves so delightful, all the same.

But it is the measure of Henry James's greatness that he has given us so definite a world, so distinct and peculiar a beauty that we cannot rest satisfied but want to experiment further with these extraordinary perceptions, to understand more and more, but to be free from the perpetual tutelage of the author's presence, his arrangements, his anxieties. To gratify this desire, naturally, we turn to the work of Proust, where we find at once an expansion of sympathy so great that it almost defeats its own object. If we are going to become conscious of everything, how shall we realize anything? Yet if Henry James's world, after the worlds of Dickens and George Eliot, seemed without material boundaries, if everything was pervious to thought and susceptible of twenty shades of meaning, here illumination and analysis are carried far beyond those bounds. For one thing, Henry James himself, the American, ill at ease for all his magnificent urbanity in a strange civilization, was an obstacle never perfectly assimilated even by the juices of his own art. Proust, the product of the civilization which he describes, is so porous, so pliable, so perfectly receptive that we realize him only as an envelope, thin but elastic, which stretches wider and wider and serves not to enforce a view but to enclose a world. His whole universe is steeped in the light of intelligence. The commonest object, such as the telephone, loses its simplicity, its solidity, and becomes a part of life and transparent. The commonest actions, such as going up in an elevator or eating cake, instead of being discharged automatically, rake up in their progress a whole series of thoughts, sensations, ideas, memories which were apparently sleeping on the walls of the mind.

What are we to do with it all? we cannot help asking, as these trophies are piled up round us. The mind cannot be content with holding sensation after sensation passively to itself; something must be done with them; their abundance must be shaped. Yet at first it would seem as if this vitalizing power has become so fertile that it cumbers the way and trips us up, even when we have need to go quickest, by putting some curious object enticingly in our way. We have to stop and look even against our will.

Thus, when his mother calls him to come to his grandmother's deathbed, the author says, "'I was not asleep,' I answered as I awoke". Then, even in this crisis, he pauses to explain carefully and subtly why at the moment of waking we so often think for a second that we have not been to sleep. The pause, which is all the more marked because the reflection is not made by "I" himself but is supplied impersonally by the narrator and, therefore, from a different angle, lays a great strain upon the mind, stretched by the urgency of the situation to focus itself upon the dying woman in the next room.

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Much of the difficulty of reading Proust comes from this content obliquity. In Proust, the accumulation of objects which surround any central point is so vast and they are often so remote, so difficult of approach and of apprehension that this drawing-together process is gradual, tortuous, and the final relation difficult in the extreme. There is so much more to think about them than one had supposed. One's relations are not only with another person but with the weather, food, clothes, smells, with art and religion and science and history and a thousand other influences.

If one begins to analyze consciousness, it will be found that it is stirred by thousands of small, irrelevant ideas stuffed with odds and ends of knowledge. When, therefore, we come to say something so usual as "I kissed her", we may well have to explain also how a girl jumped over a man in a deck chair on the beach before we come tortuously and gradually to the difficult process of describing what a kiss means. In any crisis, such as the death of the grandmother or that moment when the Duchess learns as she steps into her carriage that her old friend Swann is fatally ill, the number of emotions that compose each of these scenes is immensely larger, and they are themselves much more incongruous and difficult of relation than in any other scene laid before us by a novelist.

Moreover, if we ask for help in finding our way, it does not come through any of the usual channels. We are never told, as the English novelists so frequently tell us, that one way is right and the other wrong. Every way is thrown open without reserve and without prejudice. Everything that can be felt can be said. The mind of Proust lies open with the sympathy of a poet and the detachment of a scientist to everything that it has the power to feel. Direction or emphasis, to be told that that is right, to be nudged and bidden to attend to that, would fall like a shadow on this profound luminosity and cut off some section of it from our view. The common stuff of the book is made of this deep reservoir of perception. It is from these depths that his characters rise, like waves forming, then break and sink again into the moving sea of thought and comment and analysis which gave them birth.

In retrospect, thus, though as dominant as any characters in fiction, the characters of Proust seem made of a different substance. Thoughts, dreams, knowledge are part of them. They have grown to their full stature, almost, indeed, beyond their full stature, and their actions have met with no rebuff. If we look for direction to help us put them in their places in the universe, we find it negatively in an absence of direction—perhaps sympathy is of more value than interference, understanding than judgment. As a consequence of the union of the thinker and the poet, often, on the heel of some fanatically precise observation, we come upon a flight of imagery —beautiful, colored, visual, as if the mind, having carried its powers as far as possible in analysis, suddenly rose in the air and from a station high up gave us a different view of the same object in terms of metaphor. This dual vision makes the great characters in Proust and the whole world from which they spring more like a globe, of which one side is always hidden, than a scene laid flat before us, the whole of which we can take in at one glance.

To make this more precise, it might be well to choose another writer, of foreign birth also, who has the same power of illuminating the consciousness from its roots to the surface. Directly we step from the world of Proust to the world of Dostoievski, we are startled by differences which for a time absorb all our attention. How positive the Russian is, in comparison with the Frenchman. He strikes out a character or a scene by the use of glaring oppositions which are left unbridged. Extreme terms like "love" and "hate" are used so lavishly that we must race our imaginations to cover the ground between them. One feels that the mesh of civilization here is made of a coarse netting and the holes are

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wide apart. Men and women have escaped, compared with the imprisonment that they suffer in Paris. They are free to throw themselves from side to side, to gesticulate, to hiss, to rant, to fall into paroxysms of rage and excitement. They are free, with the freedom that violent emotion gives, from hesitation, from scruple, from analysis. At first we are amazed by the emptiness and the crudity of this world compared with the other. But when we have arranged our perspective a little, it is clear that we are still in the same world—that it is the mind which entices us and the adventures of the mind that concern us. Other worlds, such as Scott's or Defoe's, are incredible. Of this we are assured when we begin to encounter those curious contradictions of which Dostoievski is so prolific. There is a simplicity in violence which we find nowhere in Proust, but violence also lays bare regions deep down in the mind where contradiction prevails. That contrast which marked Stavrogin's appearance, so that he was at once "a paragon of beauty, yet at the same time there seemed something repellent about him", is but the crude outer sign of the vice and virtue we meet, at full tilt, in the same breast. The simplification is only on the surface: when the bold and ruthless process, which seems to punch out characters, then to group them together and then to set them all in violent motion, so energetically, so impatiently, is complete, we are shown how, beneath this crude surface, all is chaos and complication. We feel at first that we are in a savage society where the emotions are much simpler and stronger and more impressive than any we encounter in *A la Recherche du temps perdu.*

Since there are so few conventions, so few barriers (Stavrogin, for instance, passes easily from the depths to the heights of society) the complexity would appear to lie deeper, and these strange contradictions and anomalies which make a man at once divine and bestial would seem to be deep in the heart and not superimposed. Hence, the strange emotional effect of *The Possessed.* It appears to be written by a fanatic ready to sacrifice skill and artifice in order to reveal the soul's difficulties and confusions. The novels of Dostoievski are pervaded with mysticism; he speaks not as a writer but as a sage, sitting by the roadside in a blanket, with infinite knowledge and infinite patience.

"Yes," she answered, "the mother of God is the great mother—the damp earth, and therein lies great joy for men. And every earthly woe and every earthly fear is a joy for us; and when you water the earth with your tears a foot deep, you will rejoice at everything at once, and your sorrow will be no more, such is the prophecy." That word sank into my heart at the time. Since then when I bow down to the ground at my prayers, I've taken to kissing the earth. I kiss it and weep.

Such is a characteristic passage. But in a novel the voice of the teacher, however exalted, is not enough. We have too many interests to consider, too many problems to face. Consider a scene like that extraordinary party to which Varvara Petrovna has brought Marya, the lame idiot, whom Stavrogin has married "from a passion for martyrdom, from a craving for remorse, through moral sensuality". We cannot read to the end without feeling as if a thumb were pressing on a button in us, when we have no emotion left to answer the call. It is a day of surprises, a day of startling revelations, a day of strange coincidences. For several of the people there (and they come flocking to the room from all quarters) the scene has the greater emotional importance. Everything is done to suggest the intensity of their emotions. They turn pale; they shake with terror; they go into hysterics. They are thus brought before us in flashes of extreme brilliance—the mad woman with the paper rose in her hat; the young man whose words patter out "like smooth big grains. . . . One somehow began to imagine that he must have a tongue of special shape, somehow exceptionally long

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and thin, and extremely red, with a very sharp everlastingly active little tip".

Yet though they stamp and scream, we hear the sound as if it went on next door. Perhaps the truth is that hate, surprise, anger, horror, are all too strong to be felt continuously. This emptiness and noise lead us to wonder whether the novel of psychology, which projects its drama in the mind, should not, as the truth-tellers showed us, vary and diversify its emotions, lest we shall become numb with exhaustion. To brush aside civilization and plunge into the depths of the soul is not really to enrich. We have, if we turn to Proust, more emotion in a scene which is not supposed to be remarkable, like that in the restaurant in the fog. There we live along a thread of observation which is always going in and out of this mind and that mind; which gathers information from different social levels which makes us now feel with a prince, now with a restaurant keeper, and brings us into touch with different physical experiences such as light after darkness, safety after danger, so that the imagination is being stimulated on all sides to close slowly, gradually, without being goaded by screams or violence completely round the object. Proust is determined to bring before the reader every piece of evidence upon which any state of mind is founded; so convinced is Dostoievski of some point of truth that he sees before him, he will skip and leap to his conclusion with a spontaneity that is in itself stimulating.

By this distortion the psychologist reveals himself. The intellect, which analyzes and discriminates, is always and almost at once overpowered by the rush to feeling; whether it is sympathy or anger. Hence, there is something illogical and contradictory often in the characters, perhaps because they are exposed to so much more than the usual current of emotional force. Why does he act like this? we ask again and again, and answer rather doubtfully, that so perhaps madmen act. In Proust, on the other hand, the approach is equally indirect, but it is through what people think and what is thought about them, through the knowledge and thoughts of the author himself, that we come to understand them very slowly and laboriously, but with the whole of our minds.

The books, however, with all these dissimilarities, are alike in this; both are permeated with unhappiness. And this would seem to be inevitable when the mind is not given a direct grasp of whatever it may be. Dickens is in many ways like Dostoievski; he is prodigiously fertile and he has immense powers of caricature. But Micawber, David Copperfield and Mrs. Gamp are placed directly before us, as if the author saw them and we saw them from the same angle, and had nothing to do, and no conclusion to draw, except direct amusement or interest. The mind of the author is nothing but a glass between us or, at most, serves to put a frame round them. All the author's emotional power has gone into them. The surplus of thought and feeling which remained after the characters had been created in George Eliot, to cloud and darken her page, has been used up in the characters of Dickens. Nothing of importance remains over.

But in Proust and Dostoievski, in Henry James, too, and in all those who set themselves to follow feelings and thoughts, there is always an overflow of emotion from the author as if characters of such subtlety and complexity could be created only when the rest of the book is a deep reservoir of thought and emotion. Thus, though the author himself is not present, characters like Stephen Trofimovitch and Charlus can exist only in a world made of the same stuff as they are, though left unformulated. The effect of this brooding and analyzing mind is always to produce an atmosphere of doubt, of questioning, of pain, perhaps of despair. At least, such would seem to be the result of reading *A la Recherche du temps perdu* and *The Possessed*.

(*to be continued*)

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THE NOISE-MAKERS

The "Estridentistas" and Other Writers of Revolutionary Mexico

by Carleton Beals

THE revolution is crude, the revolution is loud; it is battle and cannon-fire and stentorian hopes, futility, and false creeds, land-seizures and strikes, bastard ambitions and strutting generals. All of this has gone into the Mexican mill. The Indian has shouldered serape and gun; the peasant has whirled over plain and mountain on his bony cayuse; revolt and counter-revolt have shaken the land; and in the marching and countermarching much of what was good has gone down before greedy militarists, grafting politicians, and foreign bond-holders. A Renaissance aborted. A people hauled here, hauled there. Many voices, little knowledge. And no two parts of the country singing the same song. The Vortex.

To keep pace with this turmoil, the literature of Mexico has had to slug hard and quick. No Alfonso Reyes of the milder diplomatic tradition, no Justo Sierra, or Amado Nervo, uttering from ivory towers to the revolution: "Don't forget to be intelligent". No time for sweetness and light.

And so expressionism—in poetry and in the novel. The theatre just isn't, save for a commendable back-stairs effort called "Ulysses" on Mesones Street. But in the novel, and to some extent in poetry, there have stepped forward the Noise-makers—the Estridentistas! They have to shout to be heard. They have shouted. Hence *Estridentismo.* "Noisyism!" they have shouted. Arqueles Vela has shouted. And Kin Taniya. And List Arzubide. And Salvador Gallardo. And Gutierrez Cruz, Elena Alvarez, Mariano Azuela. And Xavier Icaza.

Xavier Icaza, in his shouting, chanting novel, *Panchito Chapopote,* has told a tale in the French *surréaliste* style, with the punch of an engine piston. No time for leisurely characterization or plot complications; the colors are slammed on, the colors of Vera Cruz, sharp, overpowering: the dense vegetation, palm trees, gibbering parrots, gyrating buzzards, the dance, the song, the odors of the oil revolution. The village of Tepetate is turned overnight into a buzzing city. The officials who formerly walked barefoot in the dust—"their rapid and martial advance lacked the merited effect"—now wear shoes that click over pavements.

> No more is the ancient picturesque and drowsy Tepetate. It is traversed by a wide asphalt street. No more palm-thatched houses, but large dwellings with wooden galleries. Bad hotels, dearer than the Ritz: twenty dollars a bed. Yankee food. Costumes Yankeeized. Lunches. Quick lunch. Free lunch. Banana Lunch. No more white blouses of women who lean out to gaze at the newcomer. There is continuous intense traffic. Heavy trucks with hardware and machinery intercept. Tank cars. Sprinkling carts. Freight trucks. Trucks jammed with workers. . . . Automobiles with magnates from New York, from California, from No Man's Land.

The story of Icaza's novel is simple. The humble clerk of the Alcalde of Tepetate had

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been spurned by two of the local belles. Suddenly he is able to sell out a piece of property (which up to this time would grow nothing because of the "cursed" oil in the soil) for a fabulous sum, and he clears out for Vera Cruz, where he goes to the dogs. He sleeps with a flamboyant mulatto prostitute, and between rounds of zotol and tequila tells her his story. Then, in a fit of maudlin sentimentalism and consciousness of lost tranquillity, he determines to return to simple Tepetate and get married. But there all has been revolutionized. However, his wealth enables him to force Amalia María Dolores, his former sweetheart, to abandon the man she loves and marry him. Then Panchito is caught in the toils of the mad-house revolution; he is held for ransom, gets released, and when the storm of cavalry sweeps away from the place he is shot through the head by a stray bullet in a moment of too idle curiosity; and the author brutally announces to his hero: "I haven't any more use for you anyhow".

The story has none of the leisurely artistic calm of Hergesheimer's *Tampico*. It is more akin, in the crude strength of its treatment, to *Processional*. Here in *Panchito Chapopote* is the whole wild whirl of Mexico told in a few swift pages. Feudal slavery has been wiped away, not for the sake of freedom, but that the American invasion may proceed even more smoothly than before. And so congratulate the government, everybody. But Panchito is dead. Only Porfiriata, a negro beggar, dances on to the tune of the Marimba—carefree. This is the mocking finale. It is savage satire; fierce, bitter disillusionment, a bitter vitality of disillusionment. This is the paradoxical Estridentista combination.

II

The Estridentista movement was definitely launched half a dozen years ago in Mexico City, but the most sustained group has centered in Jalapa, the small, picturesque, tropical capital of Vera Cruz. Here, under the ægis of Governor Jara, the Estridentistas published their *portavoz, El Horizonte,* one of the most original and stimulating magazines in Latin America, now, unfortunately, defunct, but succeeded by a propaganda sheet called *Norte*. And so, just as the cradle of a new tendency in painting was the stately Guadalajara of Jalisco, the true region of the *paesista,* the land of beautiful traditions and beautiful women, so the center of *Estridentismo* became Vera Cruz.

The leading poet of the group is Maples Arce. His *Urbe* is a political harangue to the strong men of the new cities. Rebellion filters in. Not until *Andamios interiores* (Interior Scaffolding) is written, and he sets forth on *Interdicted Poems,* is he swimming full in the revolutionary stream, yet ever haunted with disillusion, a consciousness of misspent effort in all this social upheaval. Quieter, more daring, certainly more lovely and more human, is Kin Taniya in *Aeroplano* and *Radio* and a number of other slim volumes. Arqueles Vela, most careless of the Academy, the freest prose-writer, strikes the customary pessimistic note. He refuses to recognize the Mexican Revolution as a motivation of art, but rather as a subject for humor, for ignoring logic, for fantasy, for sarcasm. Most of the Mexico City bureaucrats look askance at this group. Strangely enough, though on the left in technique, it remains on the right because of its hard-headed refusal to romanticize the revolution. It has had no need for revolutionary rhetoric and sophistry as have the politicians, though it includes a number of valiant propagandists, whose work is not entirely without merit. List Arzubide in *El Horizonte* definitely harped upon revolutionary ideology. In his books of verse, *Voyager in the Vortex* and *Corner,* he is out and out Estridentista; in his *Exaltation of Emiliano Zapata* he is revolutionary; and his *Plebe* is definitely directed to the masses. In Gutierrez

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Cruz's *Red Blood* literary experiment had turned into direct communist propaganda in clod-hopper but interesting verse.

III

The Villa hordes came down from the north. The break-up. A nation harried by steel and fire. The iron heel. The up-surge. Madero had lifted the lid. Hate met hate. Pandora's box. Huerta tried to clap the lid on again. But he had his own Pandora box. Assassination. Civil war. More hate *versus* hate. The deluge.

Swarming down from the heights over plain and valley, came the Villa *dorados;* came the hordes of "The Under dogs—*Los de Abajo*". Nickelmen croaking up from the slimy depths. Demetrio Macías, the hero of *The Under Dogs,* came croaking up. Illiterate rancher, saloon brawler, assassin of unjust officials, outlaw—with nerves of iron, sure-footed, lover of battle and cold steel, madly brave, cruel but filled with a measure of fair play, a man who never forgets a kindness and never forgets an injury—he leads his host like a swarm of hungry locusts through the states of Zacatecas and Jalisco. And with him goes Mariano Azuela, the novelist, as military doctor. Fortunately he lives to write the tale.

The Under Dogs[1] gives none of the broader outlines of the Mexican Revolution; it is close-up photography of day-by-day struggle. Some unseen giant, named Monsieur Destiny, has lifted the nation by the scruff of the neck and is shaking everything loose. The cynical Solís is speaking: "The revolution is the hurricane, and the man who gives himself to it is no longer a man; he is a miserable withered leaf whipped by the gale". Even the leader Demetrio is a bewildered actor in a vast scene of which he has faint conception. He is thinking all the time of his little ranch, his yoke of oxen, his wife, of the fields to be planted—a feeling so strong that on one occasion, he almost sets out on a terrific three days' journey to see his wife and his old haunts.

It is Luis Cervantes, the turncoat of many parties, the leech-like secretary, who gives Demetrio a reason, a mission, a goal, an ideal; and at the same time tries to corrupt him with gold, for which Demetrio, trader in kind, has not the slightest use. Why worry about gold when there are plazas to be stormed, if need be, when guns and ammunition are gone, with daggers in the hand? What is the need of gold when there are wealthy houses to be looted, saloons stored with mescal and habañero, and women for the taking? The scenes have the brutality of Gorki. Azuela is the Mexican Chekhov only in so much as he is a doctor; in all else he is closer to Gorki, with a touch of Gorki's terrific pessimism and none of Gorki's revolutionary optimism. The style is crisp; it burns like the flash of a gun-muzzle close to the skin. Azuela knows the Under Dogs. He has seen the revolution; he has smelled it; he has felt it. His language is the language of reality, the patois of the Nickelmen, crude, often vile, truculent, fiendish. Prostitutes, Las Pintadas, come and go. One is shot through the belly. Women are taken on and cast off, like old trappings. A country girl, kind to Demetrio, is sent for. The leech Luis, whom she loves, tricks her into the arms of his chief. The saloon talk is of killings: "In Parral I killed. . . . In Chihuahua I killed". . . . The theme is inexhaustible. Now the topic is stealing. "In such and such a place I stole. . . ." Old scores are settled, savagely, murderously, two eyes for one, two teeth for one. . . . And orgies, vivid as Carlyle and the French revolution. Broken wine-casks. People licking up aged wine from gutters. Abysmal violence.

Here again, in Azuela, is the terrible disillusion, the *Götterdämmerung:* "What a farce, my friend, if those to whom we offer all our enthusiasm, life itself, to overthrow a miserable assassin (Huerta) turn out to be the makers of a monstrous pedestal on which

[1] Translated into English by Enrique Munguia, Jr., and soon to be published in New York by Brentano's.

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a hundred or two hundred men of the same kind can mount! . . . People without ideals! People of Tyrannies. . . . Sorrows of the blood! . . . The psychology of our race condensed into two words! . . . Rob! Kill!"

It is a very dark corner of the revolution. Over and beyond are the vague outlines of the Aguas Calientes convention, of the struggle against Carranza and Obregón, of the defeat of Villa at Celaya, but of these things the bewildered though brave Demetrio knows nothing. He is a blind agent. He is the withered leaf. His story is the story of his kind, of those who because of the ruthlessness of the Díaz régime were tossed into the arena of rebellion, forced to fight, without ever really knowing why they were there, yet swept on and on in ever faster rhythm, lifted up on a sea of conscious freedom as they swung over ridge and valley, tasting the glories of clean hot skies and the scent of mesquite and sage-brush, and the camaraderie of marching feet and clicking guns. Ever faster the rhythm. Cold steel in the hands, new cheap joys to be seized, yet all the time the sad nostalgia of the tranquil ranch-life throwing a lurking wistfulness over all their Tamerlanean enjoyments. The cycle of Demetrio, who dies alone, firing his last shot from behind a mountain rock, is the cycle of his kind in an hour of terrible birth throes for Mexico.

Demetrio is a humbler, less grandiose type than the famous Sarmiento's *Facundo*. Nevertheless, in some ways this novel surpasses the masterpiece of the Argentinian. All in all Azuela bids fair to become the novelist of the Mexican Revolution. His books mount up, and they form a broad canvas of the dark events of the past eighteen years. The author was born in 1879 in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, a small provincial town, on the banks of a forgotten river. He studied medicine in Guadalajara. He returned to Lagos and wrote novels. *María Luisa, Los Fracasados* (The Failures)—intimate pictures of the Díaz régime, soon to crumble. He feels the quickening of the pulse, the stirring of the masses, the Gringos smelling out the petroleum. *Mala Yerba* (Evil Weed) tells the story. The Madero revolution begins, conquers, fails: *Andrés Pérez*. But through Madero's rise, Azuela becomes a local political figure. He writes *Sin Amor* (Without Love). Comes then his career as a doctor in the field with the blind hosts of Villa. He absorbs firsthand the material for his best novel, *Los de Abajo,* which, though printed ten years ago in exile in El Paso, went unheeded until the last year and a half. Now its fame is sweeping the Spanish-speaking literary world. Azuela comes to Mexico City, settles as a poor physician in the poor *barrio* of Santiago Tlalteloco, and in silence and obscurity he paints in the rest of the canvas of the revolution: *Los Caciques* (Bosses), *The Flies, The Tribulations of a Respectable Family*—the middle-class in the revolution, a pitiful tale. He steps fully into the modern current and style, approaches the Estridentistas with other more recent books: *La Malhora* (Evil Hour), *El Desquite* (*The Recompense*).

IV

Put beside Azuela *El Feroz Cabecilla* (The Ferocious Little Chief) stories of the revolution, by Rafael Muñoz, and *El Aguila y la Serpiente* (The Eagle and the Serpent) by Martín Luis Guzmán, for anecdotal background, and you have the best of the "literature of the revolution", all told in striking narrative form. Some of the stories of Muñoz, especially *El Feroz Cabecilla* which is of another Demetrio hoisted into power beyond his capacity, are fully the equal of Georges D'Esparves Este's stories on the Napoleonic period. The tales of Muñoz, with lightning strokes, give us the cruelty, the heroism, the ferocity, the pathos of the period. The descriptions are memorable—the reckless barehanded charges upon machine guns, the constant uncertainty for the immediate future, the reaction when opportunity presents towards any sort of excess, the terrible phys-

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ical ordeals, the suffering from the frightful heat across that sink of death, the Bolsón de Mapimí.

Strangely enough, it is the revolution of the North and not of the South, the revolution of Villa and not of Zapata, that has had its story-tellers and chroniclers. The South has merely felt and hated and died; the North has ruled, especially, the states of Sonora and Coahuila, hence has been articulate. The most articulate book is *The Eagle and the Serpent* by Guzmán, the perfect companion piece of Azuela and Muñoz. It is a book of personal reminiscences, of adventure, of brilliant character etching, of dramatic episodes. More prolix, less incisive, written with that mixture of good humor and farce and devil-may-care attitude which never deserts the Mexican even in the moments of grimmest difficulty, of gravest danger, of most serious responsibility. The book also embraces the political and social ramifications of the upheaval of which the heroes of Azuela and Muñoz are ignorant. It explains the gale as well as the leaves in the gale. Though prolix the story is told simply in a delightful and vivid prose style, without the slightest affectation. There are pages of quick drama, of executions, of pursuits, of assassinations, of spies, a vivid episode when, during a flight of Villa, sleep became a more terrible pursuer than the Federals with Mausers in their hands. Guzmán has his prejudices: he is rapidly anti-Carranza; he loves Villa, and never deserted him in his darkest hour. Yet he is truthful. The worst of Villa becomes admirable, even his cruel fanatic, ruthless and irresponsible characteristics, even his babyish sentimentalities, his infantile pomposity, shine in Guzmán's eyes; all is worth the telling, and so the caudillo stands out stark and clear. Guzmán's attitude is Boswellian. But above all his book gives an adequate frame in interesting narrative for the etchings of Azuela and Muñoz and other isolated tales of the period.

What is the intrinsic significance of the "literature of the revolution"? Icaza is a spectacular *tour de force,* a projection of the French *surréalisme.* He is interesting as phenomenon and as a state of mind; but Azuela and Muñoz have carried over into more durable literature. The significance of most of this writing is that it definitely tears loose from the European current. It is national literature. It begins at home with things intimately known. And for that reason it is much stronger. It becomes a point for new departure. Mexico has become important enough, dramatic enough, terrible enough, for its writers to seek native themes, native characters, native style, and tell the story in a native way. This presents difficulties, first of all because the Mexican language is not yet shaped. The Indian dialects, the foreign intrusions, the Castilian have not been fused into a workable amalgam.

But as a matter of fact, the Mexican novel —though it has never enjoyed the wide development of other genres, for examples of interesting Mexican novels are few and far between—has always been more native, always more rooted in local soil than other kinds of writing. The Mexican national traits borrowed little of the hard-headed realism of the Spaniard. The Mexican, rather, took over the Spaniard's romanticism and sentimentalism—and these are not good growths on which to graft a powerful fiction stock. Poetry has suffered even more. Now and then a slight French influence, as in the case of Amado Nervo, has turned aside the current. But the novelist (Azuela for instance), perpetuates and deepens the native channels.

The first burst of Mexican freedom, the wars for independence, resulted in realism and naturalism in the novel. It saw the production of the most powerful piece of fiction yet written in Mexico—*Periquillo Sarmiento,* by Fernando Lizardi, "the Mexican Thinker". Though this takes as its model the Spanish picaresque novel—seventy-five years after the European models had reached maturity —it comes to grips with the Mexican scene.

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No referee could break that clinch. *Periquillo Sarmiento,* for me, is one of the world's greatest books, one of the greatest books that have come out of Latin America. It has a super-Johnson screed against literary patrons. It even has a glossary of Mexicanisms, such as certain present-day American novels have of Americanisms when making their bow to the English élite. With pitiless insight and tremendous humor, with Dickensian flair, *Periquillo Sarmiento* investigates every Mexican institution. Added to this, harsh caricature, in which the Mexican is always supreme, gives the work a touch of Smollett and Fielding. And so far as the social scope is concerned the sweep is Balzacian.

Azuela probably does not tie the shoe laces of El Pensador, but he and the other contemporaries I have mentioned are interesting, certainly, for the possibilities they open up. They are not maudlin, and they twist the current of Mexican literature back into the sunlight of things Mexican. It is a pitiless sunlight.

Azuela, it is true, consciously or unconsciously borrows from his predecessor, Heriberto Frías. This writer's *Tomochic,* if it lacks the cruel incisiveness of Azuela, has similar subject matter; and, though it deals with the Díaz period, similar treatment. *Tomochic* reveals that the sires of the Villa hordes were the law-making and terror-inspiring Federals of Díaz, who had just as little respect for justice, for decency, for the law they enforced, as the upstarts of the revolution. In *Tomochic* are depicted the same orgies, the same brutalities, the same loot spirit, save that the perpetrators wore the uniform of the great dictator and hence could do no wrong. In one or two passages, however, Frías rises close to genius. In the recounting of the taking of Tomochic, no more terrible, more skin-crawling description of human warfare and military depravity has ever been written. Henri Barbusse and Latzko are tame beside him. And what is more frightful, more majestic, more purging to the soul, than the camp saturnalia after the victory?

There is yet to be established the tradition of a novel which embraces Mexican life as broadly as did those of El Pensador, and at the same time penetrates the depths of the Mexican mind, and Mexican characters, in the light of modern Mexican life comprehensively understood. The psychological trend of the modern novel will not be found in Mexico, where revolution, ironically, is made for reform, and things shouted as radical are usually but belated reactions. Yet its literature has much of the physical aspects of Russian realism plus a pessimism peculiarly Mexican, not the Mencken pessimism of gusto and ideas, but rather that earthy fatalism which nourishes a race in sorrow and leaves all graver issues to the gods, or at least to the sun, the winds and the rain.

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JIM

by John Russell McCarthy

Our Jim, like every towsled lad,
Was once a poet, free and mad.

He walked with streams and talked with trees
And knew the airy paths of bees.

Today he's neat and smooth and tall;
Today he is not mad at all.

As one lost out of heaven he looks
Backward for half-remembered brooks.

Backward his wary glance he sends
To shapes of myth that once were friends.

His face is smiling and he goes
Where need and duty lead his nose.

Youth, that made him poet once,
Has left a lost, uncertain dunce

Who smiles and follows day by day
A never-quite-familiar way.

Expectantly at every turn
His eyes light up, but never burn.

In night nor day, in sleep nor book,
Can he find message from his brook.

He buys the labor of his bees;
He walks serenely on his trees.

By "friends" he means the folk he greets
And hides his soul from, on the streets.

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Are Youth and Life, he wonders, one?
Then Life with Youth is surely gone.

Or if cold Life, because it's stronger,
Murders Youth, why clasp it longer?

Jim simply wonders—smiles and goes
Where need and duty lead his nose,

Except for backward-glancing eyes
Which never quite grow thin and wise.

And while he writes his numbers down
Or dodges motors in the town

He sometimes hopes old age may bring
A bit of song for him to sing.

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A LONDON LETTER

by Rebecca West

Victorian London and childhood ghosts—Why the critics acclaim mawkish novels—A novel of our age: Louis Marlowe's "Two Made Their Bed"—New fashions in feminine revolt—A novelist to succeed John Galsworthy—The London production of Toller's "Hoppla"—Continental realism and British fantasy.

London, March.

I LIVE half an hour from Piccadilly Circus, in two floors of a mid-Victorian mansion (just over the way from the house where Thackeray was living when he started the *Cornhill Magazine*) which, like its fellows, is given the color of a hippopotamus by stucco and gray brick and the ungainliness of a hippopotamus by thoroughly bad design. One lives there only because there is all about it a green plenitude of communal gardens. In summer I sit and work on a wide balcony under the dancing shade of an aspen and look on a lawn fringed by the best of whatever the month brings in flowers, which is the common property of the block; and on my two minutes' walk to the nearest taxi-rank and subway station I pass four squares that are, everyone of them, sylvan glades. This is due to the extreme esthetic sensibility of Queen Victoria's Consort, Prince Albert. This district was developed by the Great Exhibition of 1857, which was held in the adjacent part of Hyde Park, and Prince Albert supervised the plans. To this task he brought the intense love of beauty which, working in the sphere of nature, made him devise those richly imaginative afforestation schemes that produced some of the loveliest woodland scenery in England, and, working in the sphere of art, made him do so much for the encouragement of music in this country. Yet I suppose no historical character is more closely identified with sheer bad taste than poor Prince Albert; and all because his sorrowing widow erected the hideous Albert Hall and Albert Memorial in his honor.

What could be more unjust, I wondered this afternoon, as I walked along Piccadilly to the London Library, which was founded as a result of Thomas Carlyle's inability to buy some books he needed for his research. And I believe I thought of nobody during that walk who did not belong to Albert's age. Why should I? I pass no buildings which are not either old or designed to harmonize with old neighbors. Not one single architect has dared anywhere in those two miles a façade that has had any reference to modern life. Moreover, I passed buildings beyond number which recall memories of my childhood so vividly that it very easily seemed to me as if I had shrunk to a trifle under four feet and were trotting along beside the tall ghosts of my father and my uncles, who gossip with moustachioed lips of Parnell, Gladstone, Chamberlain and Rhodes; and who sometimes point their canes, without which their generation could not walk, at great houses and speak of Palmerston, Disraeli,

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Peel, the Iron Duke, and names belonging to an antiquity so much remoter than themselves that one knew they too must have heard them from those who were to them as tall ghosts to a trotting child. In fact, when I am in a mood to slip out of life into fantasy, London enables me to pass in the drooping of an eyelid into a mere re-enactment of the past: and I can disregard, and dislike for their incursions on my reverie, the people in the streets, who happen to be the age in which I live.

* * *

It is because I, like every moderately intelligent person who lives in London (or indeed in any part of England), am perpetually exposed to this fourth dimensional temptation that there has arisen a particularly scandalous state of affairs in modern English criticism. Recently, having fled to a hotel from my apartment (where a flood in the basement had cut off gas, electric light and water) I disposed my dog in his basket with a marrowbone and myself in bed with two highly-praised novels, and hoped we would be on an equal plane of satisfaction. Believe me, we were not. Both novels were twaddle —flat, plain twaddle, recognizable as such by persons of normal sight. The first was a novel purporting to give an account of the life of a *vivandière* with Napoleon's armies during the Russian campaign. Surprise has been expressed by many because its author proves to be quite a young woman, yet such surprise as is justly adherent to the work springs from the circumstance that it was written by any other than a schoolgirl of sixteen, seduced into authorship by the sleek pages and marbled covers of a new exercise book rather than by any more specific bent for authorship. It is as mawkish and missish as could be. One is left with the impression that Napoleon's soldiers would have fled from a representative group of Miss Spence's pupils as from a tough crowd. The intolerable prettification of life which is characteristic of the author's vision can be judged from the incident where two beautiful Russian girls are found dead of cold in a carriage crossing the plains, and are represented as being exquisite with the supernatural glow of waxen fruit under glass, with the intensified perfection of form of branches picked out with frost. Not in the universe of this book are the green and violet pallors of the frozen, their pitiful lumpishness nor any other horrors; but they are excluded, not as the result of a selective process, but along with the rest of reality, so there is no truth or beauty either. Yet this was a better book than the other, of which this reverie of the celibate heroine is a fair sample:

> "It is indeed a nice point," she remembered reading, "to decide which of the two is the greater, the man who thinks of the way in which to do things or the man who does them; but we may safely conclude that the inventor and the exploiter are necessary to each other, since the one without the other would be useless."
>
> Was that not true, too, of herself and Annice, and of the myriads in the world who fell into rank behind them? Annice, indeed, had lived and exploited life to the full, but it was Lydia who had made it possible for her to do so. If it was good that there should be life and love—and Lydia felt that it was good—then those who made such life possible were not without their value, spinsterish, dull and duty-ridden though they might seem. And at this their favourite platitude—"it takes all sorts to make a world"—beat upon Lydia's mind with new force. It did, indeed, take all sorts to *make* a world; Annice and she between them had *made* Annice's rich and exciting life, had made possible the younger generation clustering about Annice's life and in the handing of it on to the next generation; there was a kind of common achievement, a partnership, between them.

Is this one of the Elsie books? No, of course it isn't. The Elsie books are far more sophisticated.

* * *

Now, why did these books enjoy the pas-

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sionate favor of the English critics?—who, I take my oath, have given those innocencies concerning the *vivandière* as good reviews as anything has got since *The Constant Nymph.* The answer is simply that they do not disturb those who have used this English egress into the past, for the reason that they contain absolutely nothing that is relevant to our age. They might just as well have been written in 1899. That this is so is proved by the lukewarm reception given to three books which are true children of our age. One is Sylvia Townsend Warner's *The True Heart,* which is in the vein of fantasy; and that, as David Garnett's *Lady Into Fox* and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* have shown, is the medium which just at this moment the poetic temperament finds the perfect vehicle of expression, prose though it be.

The True Heart is infinitely better than *Lolly Willowes,* and much better than *Mr. Fortune's Maggot.* It is a fairy-tale about a charity child that gives—what does it give? That heart-rending emotion which one got at the Sunday services in the Chapel of the Foundling Hospital, when the little girls fell on their knees, and whipped their white aprons to cover their mobcapped heads and prayed to a Power that in contrast with their tininess seemed very vast, and, since it had put them in their present place, seemed stern, very stern. It is a pleasing allegory of the frail psyche born into the harsh universe; and it is specifically modern; and it is not greatly liked. Nor is Mr. Louis Marlowe's *Two Made Their Bed,* which is reviewed over and over again with exclamations of amazement on the part of the reviewers as to where the author met people as extraordinary as his characters. Yet the heroine is completely typical of the generation that has grown up in Europe since the War, which wants to unpick civilization and make the garment anew, and is deterred by respect for tradition, since the result of tradition most obvious to it is the present state of economic and social chaos. She makes a feminist revolt which is completely different from the feminist revolts of the past.

I have as neighbors in my mid-Victorian mansion three old ladies whose state is typical of the conditions against which the prewar women rebelled. One can find them at home any morning, three maiden ladies of seventy, seventy-one, seventy-two summers, one practicing the harp, one copying a steel engraving of greyhounds on the pastel pages of an album, the third writing a translation of *I Promessi Sposi* into an exercise book in a fine Italian hand. They are so glad to see one —which is no compliment, for they would be glad to see anyone. They know nobody. They have never known anybody. Yet they have obviously plenty of money, they have been beautiful, they are not fools, they have pretty manners.

The mystery is explained by the multitude of pictures of Papa—bullet-eyed, bearded Papa—that hang all over the house—and by the adoring anecdotes they tell of Papa's tyranny and obstinacy. Papa was one of those monsters of perverse paternal passion not uncommon in that age, like the father who acted as Elizabeth Barrett Browning's jailer till she was in her fortieth year, who could not bear to share with anyone else not merely the affections but even the perceptions of their children. The old-fashioned feminist revolt was against such Papas; it demanded liberty for women to gratify their desire for love and work. The new-fashioned feminist revolt is against the undisputed sway of the desire for love and work, lest these imperil that essence of the soul which depends on independence. "Can I devise a way by which I can love a man without falling under his domination to the least degree in things either material or spiritual?" she asks. "What is the best way for me to earn my living without surrendering my freedom to my employer or aiding society in its tyrannies over other individuals?" Inspired by this scrupulousness she examines every situation wholly without reference to tradition, as if she were

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the first woman, and these the first entanglements of humanity in circumstance.

Any examination of fundamental motives is all to the good, though this enterprise seems to me to be conducted priggishly, with a doctrinaire rejection of the non-intellectual wisdom of the flesh. The heroine has a baby, announces sententiously that she does not feel different, expresses dark suspicions that society is trying to put something over on women by falsely alleging that they all have the maternal instinct, and gives her child away to a woman who adopts it. This seems to me being solemn about women in a new way that is just as tiresome as the old. Surely the sensible thing is to admit that babies resemble caviare, the music of Bach, or the poetry of John Donne in that they are repellent to the untutored perceptions of many people but have such a complete accord with the deeper nature of the human organism that they become the great passions of those who cultivate a closer acquaintance with them. I do not share Mr. Marlowe's unqualified admiration for the kind of people he writes about, but I can safely affirm that they exist, and they are enormously important. If an American reads *Two Made Their Bed* he will perhaps understand how it happens that, in an age when there is no sympathy for reformist movements and altruism with all its works is regarded cynically, the young middle-class intellectuals, who have nothing on earth in common with the proletariat, will vote Labor at the present General Election. It is not that they have any faith in Marxian or any other kind of Socialism, so much as that they believe a Labor Government would scrap tradition and art back to the beginning of things.

* * *

I do not think it is because *Two Made Their Bed* is a study of contemporary radicals that its merits are insufficiently recognized. It is simply because it is a study of contemporaries. It has long been a cause of grief to the discerning that while Mr. Galsworthy's early books told the absolute truth about the Forsytes of that time, his later novels, such as *The White Monkey* and *Swan Song,* which purport to give a picture of the young people of today, bear no relation to the truth at all. Everything, from the primary motives of their characters to their slang, is wildly inaccurate. But there has now arisen a novelist who has taken over Mr. Galsworthy's method and uses it to express a very real knowledge of English people of the prosperous classes in youth and early middle-age. Miss F. M. Mayor's *The Rector's Daughter* and *The Squire's Daughter* tell the truth about the conventional class in which young people do not yet think of going to live away from their parents, just as *Two Made Their Bed* describes the class in which bright young people leave their homes and go to live alone in a city just as automatically as they do in America. These two books are full of art.

I do not believe that even Mr. Galsworthy can beat Mr. Morgan at his favorite game of building up characters simply by reporting brief snatches of their conversation. Creative writers admire them enormously; so does, I am told by the lady who looks after me at the Times Book Club, the ordinary library subscriber; but the critics are not enthusiastic. They give them nothing like the praise they shower on Charles Morgan's *Portrait in a Mirror* which indeed merits praise, since its language is shaped by fastidiousness, which finds suitable subjects for that graceful language, but which has the slight disadvantage of being dead, of containing nothing that was not experienced by men who are now buried; which has, therefore, surrendered all claim to be of the kingdom of art, which belongs to the living, who tell what they (and not their predecessors) have seen.

* * *

For these reasons one felt great exaltation when one met Ernst Toller, who came over

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here for three days to have a look at the English production of *Hoppla! wir leben!* This production was greatly disliked by the London critics, who said it was dull, and considered its theme remote; though actually it depicts in German terms a state of affairs which is one of the most interesting unresolved phases of English life. He writes of a German Socialist, sentenced to death for participation in the post-war revolution and reprieved, coming out of the lunatic asylum where he has been for eight years, ever since the shock of his reprieve unbalanced his reason, and finding the Republic in full working order, and, as inevitably would happen, regarding every compromise his comrades had made to get the machine going as a shameless betrayal of principle. The situation is in fact extremely relevant to what has happened in the British Labor Party, which has come to a position of great power just at the point when the ablest men of the party have become extremely sceptical of the practicability of Marxism, with the result that the slower-witted members (who are often those who have made the most sacrifices for the cause) perpetually suspect them of treachery. In any case, while Mr. Somerset Maugham's *The Sacred Flame,* which New York rejected in a fortnight, was cramming its theatre with audiences directed thither by critics who joyfully recognized a play that might have been written at the same time as *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, Hoppla* had so short a run that Toller was lucky to find it still on when he got here. If it had not been, we would have felt unhappy and ashamed, for his visit was extraordinarily stimulating.

* * *

To authors above a certain power, it has often seemed to me, events present themselves according to their own style. They begin by inventing certain incidents and describing them in certain ways; and then life says, "Oh, that is how he likes things to happen, is it? Well, then they shall happen to him like that!" An old gentleman once told me that when he was young he was walking in a country lane and met George Meredith and his first wife on horseback. He expressed surprise to meet them and asked if they lived near there. Mrs. Meredith pointed her riding switch at a hill and said, "Yes, that is our cottage, the one that has the sun shining on it just now". He tried his hand at a compliment, and said, "I am sure the sun is always shining on your home". The wife and the husband exchanged looks, the wife burst out laughing, her horse took fright and bolted with her for a few yards; she reined him up and walked him away, not looking back at her husband. It was a few weeks after that she made her elopement that ended in misery and madness. That is curiously like an incident in a Meredith novel; and when I met Ernst Toller it was curiously like a scene in one of his plays. I had been unable to go to the P.E.N. Club dinner which he was attending, and I asked him to call about eleven at the Ritz, where I was saying goodbye to some New York friends who were sailing the next day. I was in their bedroom when there was a knock on the door. I opened it and saw a man who was obviously German. "Are you Herr Toller?" I asked. He said half-sincerely, half-ironically, "No, I have not that honor! I am Wertheimer. But they told me Toller would be here". My friends asked him in and sat him down with a drink, and then there was another knock on the door. This time it was Mr. Toller, a thin, eager young man with wavy black hair with a slight resemblance to Charlie Chaplin, who had been brought along from the P.E.N. Club by little Pamela Frankau, the young novelist. I said, "There is a friend of yours here, Mr. Wertheimer. He showed no enthusiasm when I took him for you!" The two men looked across the room, which was crowded with the towering wardrobe trunks that are the sign of American plutocracy, which gleamed with the silver of the dressing table set and the silks that were laid on the bed ready for

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packing, and Toller said, half-sincerely, half-ironically, "Well, I too would not like Wertheimer to be taken for Toller!" Then they smiled and shook hands. There was a situation there. Toller was President of the Bavarian Communist Republic at the time of the Revolution, and Wertheimer had been one of his ministers. When they were defeated Toller was irreconcilable and was sent to prison for five years; and Wertheimer had taken his liberty and had gone out into the world to work for moderate Socialism. And they had not met since, till this evening in the Ritz.

* * *

We went downstairs to the ballroom and had supper under the blue sky ceiling of that insipid apartment, while the pretty women in lace gowns danced with men handsome as prize cattle. One of the pretty women, a blonde goddess, detached herself from her party and came and sat with us while Toller told how the governor of his prison had suddenly seen that a book of poems about swallows by his prisoner had been published, and realized that the manuscript must have been smuggled out of prison; and demonstrated the strangeness of the militant temperament by initiating a campaign against . . . the swallows. Every nest in the fortress was destroyed by the bayonet. The poor little swallows built them again and again, but the governor would not be intimidated. Up went the bayonets again.

As one listened one realized that whatever talent or genius he might have was getting a better chance to fulfill itself than it would if he were an Englishman, because he stood in a better relationship to his times. He was part of a culture that knew what was going on all over itself and was therefore as lively as an athlete that has trained himself to coordinate his movements; it would not constantly disconcert its children by pretending that it did not know what they were talking about if they alluded to any ideas younger than the last thirty years. Only . . . the blonde goddess was the author of *Serena Blandish,* a book that I hope you are reading in New York, for no dramatization could carry the full beauty and art of that fantasy.

It is perhaps true that the lack of an understanding and lively contemporary culture in England leaves the eccentric genius all the more privacy to develop itself. Thus it happens that all the best imaginative productions of the last decade in England—Walter de la Mare's *Memoirs of a Midget,* David Garnett's *Lady Into Fox,* Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Mr. Fortune's Maggot,* A. E. Coppard's *Best Short Stories* and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*—have all been in the nature of fantasies. Yes, London is like a museum in which there can flourish only the drones who like conning over the books of the dead, or the strange souls who are so transported out of themselves by ecstasy that they might as well be there as anywhere else.

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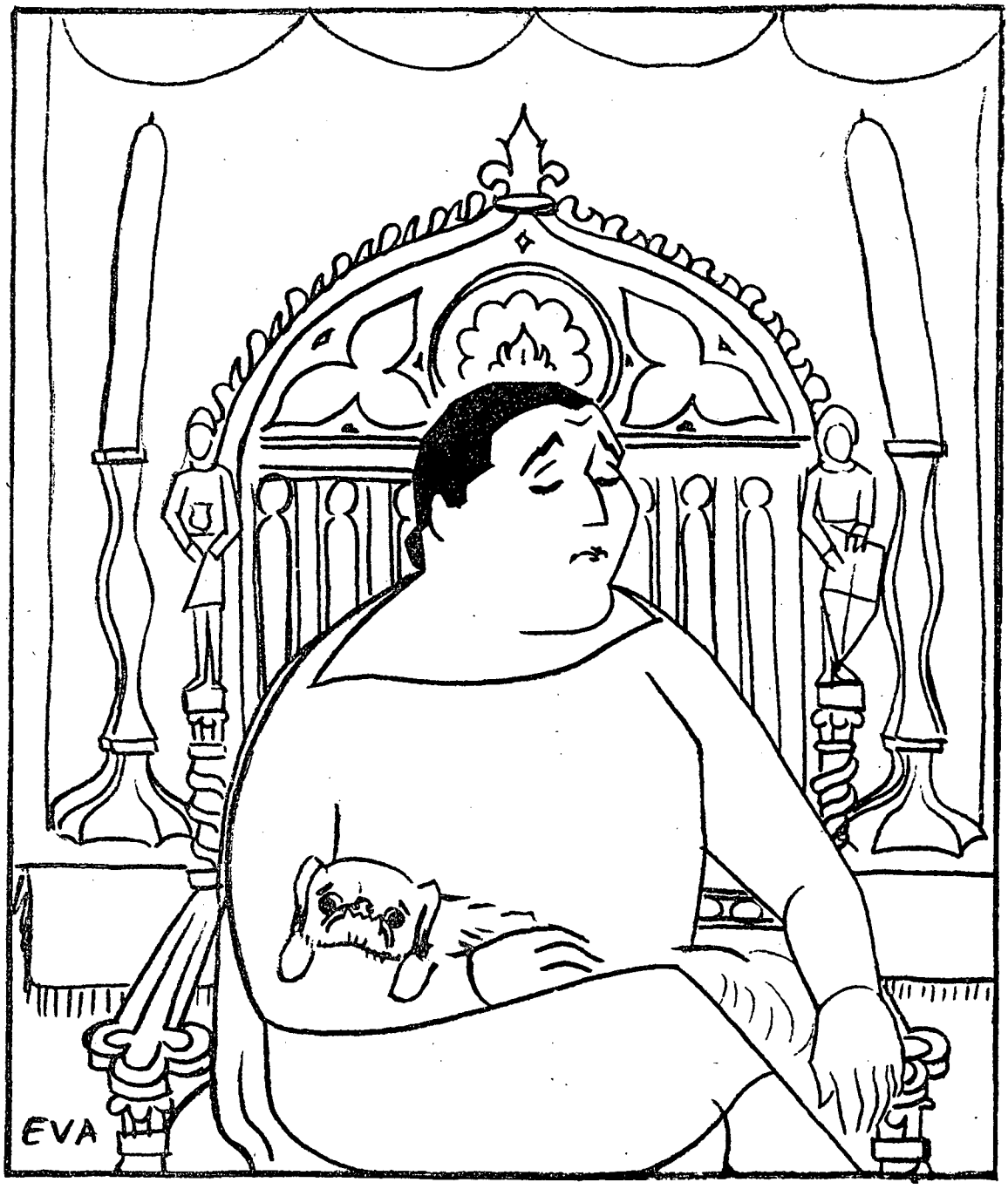

FANNIE HURST

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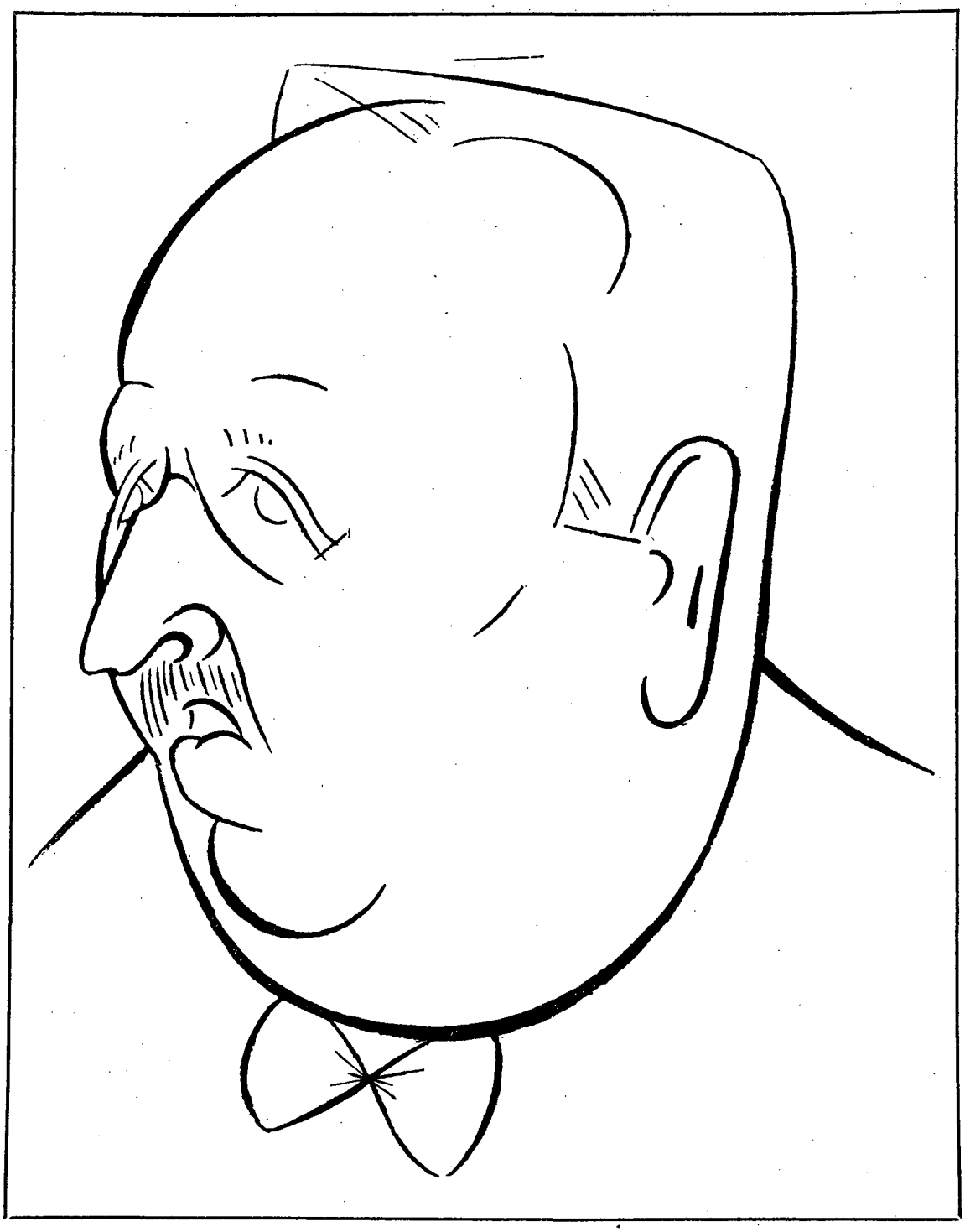

FORD MADOX FORD

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SARAH ORNE JEWETT

by C. Hartley Grattan

SARAH ORNE JEWETT's art is so quiet and unassuming that it escapes the attention of all but those few who can take pleasure even today in the quiet and unassuming. It is altogether natural that it appeals to but few, for the social situation which Miss Jewett essayed to portray is so far from that which most American readers know. It requires a wrench of the imagination even to comprehend Miss Jewett's world; and with her mode of seeing the world and her literary methods we have but a distant sympathy. She is, in a few words, the sort of artist that can be appreciated only historically. Yet her work is not mere documentation of a vanished epoch. It is art of a true and delicate sort.

She lived from 1849 to 1909 but her imaginative life was largely concentrated in the life on the coast of Maine before the Civil War. Her memories were her own, but sharpened and pointed by the intelligent and sympathetic tutoring in perception that her father gave her. If she had chosen to advance with the world as she lived her life there is plenty of evidence in her letters that she would have seen as deeply and transmuted her findings into just as delicate stories as those she did write. Mentally she was of the last half of the Nineteenth Century, admiring Tennyson, Arnold, Thackeray, Grant and Queen Victoria. Yet she read with intelligent insight Flaubert and Zola. Indeed she took as mottoes for her work-desk two thoughts of Flaubert: *Ecrire la vie ordinaire comme on écrit l'histoire* and *Ce n'est pas de faire rire mais d'agir à la façon de la nature, c'est à dire de faire rêver*. In a way they sum up her ideals as an artist.

A discerning historian of American literature has treated her work under the title, "Recorders of the New England Decline". Miss Jewett epitomized, in letters, aspects of life in the era between the passing of the epoch that gave the world the art of the clipper ship and the fine houses such as are found in Salem and the rise of manufacturing in New England. She did not go back so far as Hawthorne usually did for her subject matter; nor did she bring to fine flower an intellectual tradition of this self-contained area, as did Emerson. She took for her field a narrower and more restricted section of life, but one that offered as rich material to an artist whose sweep was not broad. The era of great adventure was over; the adventurous spirit exhausted; there remained a group of old ladies and frost-bitten men who lived at a quiet even pace, self-contained and self-respecting. They carried memories of long journeys in the days of their youth, but now they lived ordered lives "as faultless as the miniature landscape of a Japanese garden, and as easily kept in order". In their curiously circumscribed existences there was a point of rest, a summing up of generations of experience in social living, which gave the artist a situation that was fairly waiting for its portrait to be painted.

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Miss Jewett was the painter. She approached her subject with deep seriousness and profound understanding. Her own childhood, never cramped by severe discipline, was made rich by constant association with her father, whose appreciation of his patients (he was a doctor) was sincere and discerning. He saw the country people with a nice balance of mind that he passed on to his daughter. She came to story-telling deliberately enough but avoided a pitfall of the self-conscious artist: the necessity of seeking out a field in which to exercise his talents. She had no desire to report life; she sought to render life itself; and she succeeded. Necessarily her early efforts suffered from awkwardness, but she was of an enquiring turn of mind and absorbed easily the wisdom of artists of greater esthetic perception. In its final expression her art was a neat balance of life and literature. The curious thing is that her own life is so much like one of her stories that, to be satisfactory, it should be told in the spirit that informs them. Professor Matthiessen has done the task very successfully. His *Life of Sarah Orne Jewett* (Houghton Mifflin. $3.00) is to my mind completely satisfactory, neither over nor underdrawn. It is told with as great delicacy as one of Miss Jewett's stories.

The land was not sufficient for the human beings who settled on the Maine coast. Of necessity they turned to the sea. From early days of trading with Europe and the West Indies they ventured farthest afield when they turned to the India trade. It was their highest and final expression of commercial adventure. When that urge was spent there was nothing to do but rest and wait—not consciously of course—for a new urge. The women waited; the men went elsewhere. Widows of long standing and maiden ladies (old maids is too violent a term for them) form a large part of Miss Jewett's world. Some of them had been with their menfolks to the far corners of the earth. Every house has a tangible reminder of the great days in

the form of objects-of-art and other plunder of distant countries. Economically they live on the remnants of the prosperity of those dead days. They are trying to live on the land that was not sufficient for them in more adventurous days. Nevertheless they have a quiet wisdom that has come down to them and they live with a beauty of tolerance and neighborliness that cannot now be recaptured.

It is often forgotten that Miss Jewett dealt with small-town life; but nothing could be further from small-town life as we have come to conceive it. Instead of meanness of spirit, of warped mentalities and vulgar ambitions, we have a synthesis of provincialism that is tenuous but appealing. It is impossible to be toplofty about these people. They have mastered secrets which we are vainly seeking. Their houses were rooted in the soil. They fitted into the landscape. Their ways of life were narrow, precise and formalized, but guided by a wisdom that had its roots in the widest sort of experience. They were not conscious of the world and its ways; they resisted change like pointed firs and relin-

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quished hold on their ways only when death cut them down; they were not the fine flower of a tradition, but rather the last rose on a withered and hopelessly aged bush.

To bring these people into literature required an art as delicate as their hold on life. Miss Jewett's art is precisely that kind. Its finest expression was recently isolated by Miss Willa Cather in two small volumes. In style Miss Jewett may profitably be compared to Hawthorne. There is the same apparently effortless grace that gives no evidence of the tremendous amount of revision and care that is behind it. Structurally she was unable to write a short story. All of her stories are easily flowing chronicles or episodes in a chronicle. A novel was outside her scope. *The Country of the Pointed Firs,* her greatest piece of sustained work, is a chronicle; its high lights are episodes. She had the gift of characterization to a high degree. She lacked, however, a sense of the truly dramatic and above all a sense of tragedy. Her world is too placid; too much a world where a walk down the street is an adventure to seem quite comprehensive. She either did not perceive the tragedy in the world she was recording, or did not choose to recognize it. She never got within shouting distance of such work as Mrs. Wharton's *Ethan Frome.*

Mention of *The Country of the Pointed Firs* brings to mind both the genesis of her art and the point of view which she, as an artist, assumed. Miss Jewett once wrote that she had been moved to write about these people she knew so well because she was angered by the lack of comprehension of them shown by the earliest of the city people who came to board for the summer. Yet *The Country of the Pointed Firs* is written as though by one who came as a summer boarder! Miss Jewett differed from the boarders only in sympathy and comprehension, but she was not one of the country people either. By inheritance she was one of the local aristocracy. Her father, as a doctor, was a man marked off from the common people by training and by the tacit social differentiations that characterized New England villages. Consequently Miss Jewett never identified herself with her subjects. She was a visitor to their world whose background was wider. She did not see with them, but all round them. Even in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* she mentions a prospective trip to France. Trips to France were things of the past with the people she was writing about —dim and distant in their memories, confused with trips to China and England and part of the general memory of the great days that were gone forever.

Yet however she may have been divorced from them, she still understood them and did not intrude false notes through lack of understanding. And her delicately tempered sympathy, combined with her fine art, gave to them a place in American literature that will be more and more secure as time goes on. We may well regret that she was prevented by a personal deficiency of vision from giving us the violence and tragedy that the social situation contained, but we cannot because such aspects are lacking reject her contribution altogether.

Miss Jewett's contact with modern literature is more extensive than one would think off-hand. We may say without fear of contradiction that she exercised a profound influence on Willa Cather. Miss Cather's style undoubtedly stems from that of Miss Jewett. And the people with whom she dealt are seen at a later stage of their development in the poems of Robert Frost. We are still waiting for a really satisfactory literature expressing New England of the period from the close of the Civil War to the present when manufacturing established itself and alien peoples flocked in. That movement is seen on the fringes of Miss Jewett's world, but she avoided it. And we are just beginning to get occasional reports of the alien peoples on the abandoned farms of New England that the hardier spirits from Miss Jewett's world left for a more adventurous life elsewhere.

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THE PRINTED WORD

CONCERNING DICTIONARIES

by Wilson Follett

LEXICOGRAPHER, *n.* A pestilent fellow who, under the pretense of recording some particular stage in the development of a language, does what he can to arrest its growth, stiffen its flexibility, and mechanize its methods. For your lexicographer, having written his dictionary, comes to be considered "as one having authority", whereas his function is only to make a record, not to give a law. The natural servility of the human understanding, having invested him with judicial power, surrenders its right of reason and submits itself to a chronicle as if it were a statute. Let the dictionary (for example) mark a good word as "obsolete" or "obsolescent", and few men thereafter venture to use it, whatever their need of it and however desirable its restoration to favor—whereby the process of impoverishment is accelerated and speech decays. On the contrary, the bold and discerning writer who, recognizing the truth that language must grow by innovation if it grow at all, makes new words and uses the old in an unfamiliar sense, has no following, and is tartly reminded that "it isn't in the dictionary"—although down to the time of the first lexicographer (Heaven forgive him!) no author ever had used a word that *was* in the dictionary. . . .

—*The Devil's Dictionary*

Some forty years have added themselves to history since Ambrose Bierce scrawled the foregoing definition, and no generation since the invention of printing has made more difference to the forces at play in the formation of language. New mechanical processes have increased the volume and decreased the cost of printing until print is about as pervasive as the air we breathe. The general use of the typewriter is answerable for a thousand words produced with ease where before a hundred were produced with difficulty. Above all, the huge development of advertising has multiplied the space to be filled with reading matter; hence it has multiplied the number of periodicals, and hence the number of authors, until practically everybody is some sort of author. The dissemination of language has become so easy that no longer is the demand allowed to create and determine the supply. The supply, being determined by economic considerations quite apart from the public's disposition to read, is put forth anyhow and creates what demand it can. In short, we live today in a downpour, a torrent, of printed language, of which an almost invisible fraction represents writers who have something to say to audiences who want to hear it said. The rest of the colossal production is in excess of the number of writers competent to produce anything worth the attention for which it clamors. And so much printed speech is vented that most of it is bound to be slovenly—so much that editorial supervision of it inevitably becomes more and more slack.

Thus, if Bierce were writing in and of the Anglo-American language today, he would have something comparatively new to worry himself about. Instead of complaining that the language perishes more rapidly at one end, through obsolescence, than it can be re-

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newed at the other, he would have to complain that it is renewed too fast, and out of appalling materials. He would take to cursing the lexicographers for their hospitality. He would see them as helpless victims of the very fact that they are recorders merely and must set down a chronicle of usage rather than standards for observance. And he would pretty certainly forgive the public its servility about words which the lexicographers brand as "obsolete", on condition of its being equally servile about the words which they brand as "slang", "vulgar", "technical", or "erroneous". For the truth is, the public's servility no longer takes the form of objecting to an idiom of speech on the ground that "it isn't in the dictionary". It takes the form of defending the indefensible idiom on the ground that "it is in the dictionary". The dictionary must record whatever achieves a sufficient currency; more impoverished and invalid language than ever before does achieve currency, borne far on the flood of printed overproduction like scum on a harbor tide; and then we use the dictionary to support the atrocities which our own ignorance or cheapness has forced into it. Thus the cycle. And the Anglo-American tongue, as a result of it, does not so much decay as become gradually dilute, washed-out.

Consider one of hundreds of examples of what is occurring. A desk dictionary, the best of its size in America, contains this definition:

WELSH RABBIT, a dish made of melted cheese . . . poured over toasted bread or crackers;—sometimes erroneously called *Welsh rarebit.*

Now, that is admirable enough. "Welsh rabbit" is a deliberate linguistic joke, of the order typified by such facetious euphemisms as "Cape Cod turkey" for the codfish, "Washoe canary" for the donkey and "wood pussy" for the skunk. The force, sparkle, and identity of language derive in an important degree from just such coinages. "Rarebit", a pure invention out of clearest sky, is the result of a failure to detect the witticism. It is the gratuitous correction of a supposedly ignorant mistake that happens not to be a mistake at all. Thus, it is a mixed consequence of affectation and lack of humor, two forces always at work to sap language of its vitality. But how often do you see the correct form, "Welsh rabbit", on a restaurant menu, or indeed anywhere in print? The vulgarity of over-refinement has practically driven it out of being. And—here is the point—the very dictionary just quoted lists the following without a reservation:

RAREBIT, *n. Cookery.* A Welsh rabbit.

The same form, in other words, is in one place described as an error and in the other countenanced as a variant. The example, occurring in two categories, is a specially neat instance of the lexicographer's dilemma. In so far as he is the mere reporter, he must take the attitude that whatever is is right if the practice of enough incompetents says so. In so far as he has standards, perceptions, and a conscience, he must stand out, however feebly, for the best against the patently not so good.

The plain truth is that no writer worth his space, no speaker worth his time, ever worked in the mood of justifying his practices by the dictionary. "But it's in the dictionary" is a form of protest for those who do as badly as they are permitted, not for those who do as well as they can. Almost anything can get into a dictionary, and sooner or later nearly everything does. A dictionary, for example, after giving the adverbial uses of "otherwise", continues: "—*a.* Different". And slovenly writers write, "Whether his mood was cheerful or otherwise", "He did not know whether his protest would be effective or otherwise", and so on; recent print has broken out with a rash of this construction, probably in echo of the originally deft "wise and otherwise". But who can make sense out of "an otherwise mood", "an otherwise protest"? The adjective form is "other",

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and so a good writer writes it whenever he is remembering to be a good writer. He is always concerned with hitting the bull's-eye of his meaning, not some outer ring of the target. The decent workman respects his tools and uses each for what it was made for. He knows that a nut can be turned after a fashion with pliers, but he turns the nut with a wrench just the same. As to "otherwise" masquerading as adjective, four-fifths of its use is sheer bumptiousness and inflation anyway. Why, for instance, should an intelligently guided pen, or even a typewriter gone wild, set down such an expression as "effective or otherwise", when not a thing is meant but "effective or not"?

"Overly" is in the dictionary. So is "illy". Both have histories and their use can be extenuated by anyone who is interested in speech that invites extenuation. Nevertheless, for many generations the forms "over" and "ill" have correctly served for the adverbs; and, whatever the dictionary says, "illy" is without point except in a facetious rhyme by Mr. Arthur Guiterman.

The motor car advertising of the past decade has brought forth the remarkable word "roadability". The Jupiter Eight or the Orion Sixteen has, we read, unprecedented stamina, balance, and "roadability". If copywriters and salesmen keep this word going for a few more seasons, it will have to be in the next editions of our dictionaries, a surprising witness to the late tendency to break down, or rather to throw away, the characteristic meanings of the very suffixes which used to help us coin words that still make sense. A car that has "roadability" is, presumably, "roadable"; that is, it can be roaded—whatever that might mean. The *"able"* is, of course, inveterately passive, not active. Dean Briggs used to flourish his "non-leakable" fountain pen, with one chuckle for its name and another for the thumb and two fingers which it had never yet failed to blacken. A "non-leakable" pen is not a pen that cannot leak, but one that cannot *be leaked*.

Well, conceive the author of twenty-five years hence writing "leakable" and "roadability" and verifying their existence by the latest Webster when challenged, and you have a fine specimen of the force which makes language decay—which makes, indeed, its very renewal merely another version of decay, so that it is disintegrating at both ends simultaneously.

What is desirable in language, of course, is not pedantic respectability or uniformity or traditionalism, but simply life. For my part, I am about as much interested in mere correctness in words as I am in mere correctness in clothes—that is, a good deal less than not at all. Language needs utter freedom of coinage, the most untrammelled liberty of bold experiment. And everyone knows that in the past some of the most admirable developments in speech have come about as a result of pure ignorance. But note that the products of ignorance are various. They can be either iron or tin, either honest homespun or artificial silk. Linguistic experiment can produce keen and necessary tools; and it can also pervert good materials. It may enliven; but there is no guarantee that it will not deaden.

At any rate, do not construe these columns as any sort of plea for the hair-splittings of scholarship. The point is what language does, not where it comes from. "Wisecrack" is, it seems to me, a grand word. It had only to be invented to be indispensable; and it will be no better a decade hence, when the dictionaries have blessed it, than it is at this moment. "Dumbbell" (by association with the colloquial American sense of "dumb") is also not so bad; I suspect it may have a long life. Both illustrate a language-making process which replenishes the life of speech, and has always done so. They are evidently of metropolitan birth; equally good, and likewise absent from the dictionaries, is a rural folk-word of the Maine coast which means the same thing as the "dumb" in "dumbbell": namely, "numb" (probably by abbreviation from "numskull").

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But the amount of such creative wit at work today, whether in city or country, is lost in the general undertow of destructive stupidity. Stupidity, unlike ignorance, is never inspired. There is no real liberation, no new lease of life, to be had by abolishing the differences between "imply" and "infer", "between" and "among", "other" and "otherwise", "continual" and "continuous", "and" and "while", or by such phantasmagoric inventions as "rarebit" and "roadability" and "stick-to-itiveness". Force the record of these countless abuses into the dictionary of tomorrow, and you have simply put up a row of headstones over a row of graves.

A word, to have any validity, has to be produced out of an acquired or instinctive *word-sense*. The printed language of today—and hence the dictionaries of the future—is being produced by human automata to whom words are a commodity for which one is paid at space rates if one can scramble together enough of them to cover the area next the advertising.

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A SOJOURN IN INFINITY

by Babette Deutsch

FURTHER POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON, *withheld from publication by her sister, Lavinia, edited by her niece, Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson.* (LITTLE, BROWN. $2.50)

IN HIS difficult and exciting work on *The Nature of the Physical World,* Professor Eddington tries to clarify an obscure point by supposing that a certain person travels to a distant part of the universe and back as ordinary people go for a short sojourn to Switzerland. "An absurdly impossible experiment, you will say. Quite so," he declares, "it is outside all experience." It is uncomfortable to be unable to concur with so distinguished a scientist and so plausible an expositor as Professor Eddington, but I must disagree. This experiment is not outside all experience. And if any doubt it, let him look into the poems of Emily Dickinson. Those contained in the recently published volume only serve to confirm the belief that this woman, of whom we know nothing and everything, who performed so little and accomplished so much, was in the habit of travelling to a distant part of the universe and, happily for us, coming back.

The facts of her life, as reluctantly related by her niece, Mrs. Bianchi, who is co-editor with Mr. Hampson of the present volume, were few and simple. Except for a winter in Washington, when her father was in Congress, and a brief visit to Philadelphia, where she first heard the young minister whose bride she always considered herself to be, she did not leave her Amherst home. She was a girl of twenty-three when she met the man who was quite literally her fate, and her verse records the initial encounter:

> So the eyes accost and sunder
> In an audience,
> Stamped in instances forever,
> So may countenance
> Entertain without addressing
> Countenance of One
> In a neighboring horizon
> Gone as soon as known.

Her lover was ready to resign his profession and to leave his wife and child for her sake. But Emily would not consent. He gave up the ministry. He put a continent's breadth between them. And, shortly afterward, he died. Their love, their separation, by distance and then by death, were the mountains that bounded Emily's horizon for her remaining thirty-three years. She took refuge in her flowers, in her relation to her brother's wife, who was her closest intimate, and in her poems.

It is probable that if she had gone with the importunate man, many of these would never have been written. "When I think of any great poetic writer of the past," says William Butler Yeats, "I comprehend, if I know the lineaments of his life, that the work is the man's flight from his entire horoscope, his blind struggle in the network of the stars.

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William Morris, a happy, busy, most irascible man, described dim color and pensive emotion, following, beyond any man of his time, an indolent muse; while Savage Landor topped us all in calm nobility when the pen was in his hand, as in the daily violence of his passion when he laid it down." Emily knew this:

'Tis opposites entice,
Deformed men ponder grace,
Bright fires, the blanketless—
The lost, Day's face.

The blind esteem it be
Enough estate to see;
The captive strangles new
For deeming beggars play.

To lack enamour Thee,
Tho' the Divinity
Be only
Me.

Her little lyrics were elastic enough to include the vastness that her humdrum days could not compass. Because, to use her own metaphor, she had to plate the residue of woe with monotony, she knew the different lustre of authentic bliss.

To fill a gap—
Insert the thing that caused it.
Block it up
With other and 'twill yawn
The more;
You cannot solder an abyss
With air.

No, but you can solder it with poetry. And so, living in a seclusion that her few contacts with the world must have served to define more precisely, living, moreover, with an ache as constant and immitigable as amputation could have inflicted, Emily went voyaging beyond the antipodes and brought back news of paradisaical marvels. She could confront Infinity without shrinking, and though her verse abounds in quaint references to the Deity of her pious Puritan forebears, whom she cannot mention without a flash of comedy, she trafficked more commonly with the God of that other Emily, the second of the three famous Brontës, to whom this Emily is so profoundly akin. Consider her mock-serious complaint:

I never felt at home below,
And in the handsome skies
I shall not feel at home
I know,
I don't like Paradise.

Because it's Sunday all the time
And recess never comes,
And Eden'll be so lonesome
Bright Wednesday afternoons.

If God could make a visit,
Or ever took a nap—
So not to see us—but they say
Himself a telescope

Perennial beholds us,—
Myself would run away
From Him and Holy Ghost and All—
But—there's the Judgment Day!

Contrast this with a more compact lyric which holds the kernel of her faith:

Heaven is so far of the mind
That were the mind dissolved,
The site of it by architect
Could not again be proved.

'Tis vast as our capacity
And fair as our idea,
To him of adequate desire
No further 'tis than Here.

Her own desire was adequate. While her work was undoubtedly her means of escape from both agony and monotony—which is no mean pain in itself—it was also a reflection of exalting realities. She was one of those rare creatures to whom the common stream of experience affords uncommon excitement, to whom each day presents an enchanting pageant, for whom each night is momentous with airy oracles. Being witty as well as wise, she was not indifferent to the world, but she was able to resign it without a pang because she was possessed of a superior

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capacity for pleasure. The pine tree by her window gave her the giddy delights of the sea. The revolutions of the sun, the slower sweep of the seasons,

> The eager look on landscapes
> As if they just repressed
> Some secret that was pushing,
> Like chariots, in the breast—

these were her feasts, her jewels, her galleries, her drama, her society. Her own mind—she has testified to it—performed a ballet that, had it been visible, would have maddened a Pavlowa.

Nor did she savor less the riches her senses provided because her spirit was so wild an adventurer. Earth was her sufficient symbol for Heaven. But there is no other poet who knows as she does how to convey the breathless intimation of that which the symbol represents.

Her instrument was peculiarly fitted to her music. She had apparently no concern for craftsmanship. What mattered was the thing said, not the manner of saying it. She was writing to ease her soul, with no thought, indeed, with abhorrence, of publication. She had no desire to cut and polish the raw diamond. She had no time: the day was too deep a mine. And yet what she dashed off so hurriedly on any convenient scrap of paper, with such cavalier treatment of form, and even of syntax, has nearly always the effect of inevitability which is the hall-mark of well-wrought verse. She had small regard for the exigencies of rhyme, generally employing assonance, less by preference, one fancies, than out of sheer impatience. And yet one does not miss the perfect chime in such a quatrain as this:

> Rehearsal to ourselves
> Of a withdrawn delight
> Affords a bliss like murder,
> Omnipotent, acute.

She was more careful of metre. One recognizes her verse by the sharp tiny hammer-stroke of her usual three iambs as one recognizes a face by its most familiar expression. Not that she troubled to write it down so that it would scan correctly. That was not her affair. It is no less a delight to make it ours. But it is in her discovery of the right, the perfect word that she shows herself the mistress of her art. With the shrewdness of the metaphysical poets of the Seventeenth Century, she mixes high abstractions and vulgar commonplace in a divine brew. She can carry the freight of a whole lyric in a line, in an adjective. She closes the severe gates upon us when she speaks of a prison's "ponderous face". She warms and dazzles us with Orient midsummer noons when she declares, "Danger deepens suns", and by means of a single syllable she packs with the fat marrow of actuality the dry bones of an abstraction, thus:

> Too much of proof affronts
> Belief.
> The Turtle will not try
> Unless you leave him;
> Then return—
> And he has hauled away.

One could find a larger proportion of happy instances in the volume of her so-called *Complete Poems,* published five years ago, and even in *The Single Hound,* which appeared in 1914. The present collection, while it does not diminish her stature by a cubit, can add nothing to it. It consists of the contents of "a little unexplored package", poems that had been withheld from the press by the poet's sister, Lavinia. Why they have had to wait for publication until now, Mrs. Bianchi does not explain. Presumably because the package held, among other things, a number of lyrics either directly addressed to her lover or referring to their tragic passion. One appreciates the delicacy that refrains from exposing to the vulgar eye intimacies that the poet hated to bare, but one is left baffled and irritated by the vague explanations and the hesitant disclosures that

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Emily's literary executors see fit to make. It is high time, a hundred years after her birth, to put away the shroud that, however tenderly draped, serves but to obscure the serene dignity of the naked brow. One is reminded of Emily's own outburst against the granite nothingness that kept her from her lover:

I had not minded walls
Were Universe one rock,
And far I heard his silver call
The other side the block.

I'd tunnel until my groove
Pushed sudden through to his,
Then my face take recompense—
The looking in his eyes.

But 'tis a single hair,
A filament, a law—
A cobweb wove in adamant,
A battlement of straw—

A limit like the veil
Unto the lady's face,
But every mesh a citadel
And dragons in the crease!

One prays for St. George. It is not every generation, it is not every century, even, that poets of Emily Dickinson's calibre are to be met with. One wants, how urgently, to sweep away the last cobweb and confront the delicate lady who can report her journey to a distant part of the universe.

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FICTION

BACK TO STAY *by Jonathan Leonard* (VIKING. $2.50)

ONE would like to praise Jonathan Leonard for the faults in his first novel, *Back to Stay*. A pedagogue would say that this author had not learned "construction" and certainly a number of the incidents in *Back to Stay* appear suddenly on the page for no apparent reason except that they are convenient to the writer who, furthermore, has taken scant pains to make them seem plausible. From the pedagogue's point of view, what could be more amateurish than the incident of the burning of the Camp Meeting Tabernacle or the much more important episode of the strange visitor the night that Zenas Wardon had fixed for a blood sacrifice? In truth, the plot is a little obscure in its workings, but I believe that the obscurity is of little importance, and that what is important is the attitude of the author that permits him to be so loose in construction. Jonathan Leonard is not a slave to the current repertorial conventions of the novel: that is what his heedlessness of credible detail signifies to me. In a day when the novelist has become patiently descriptive (and uninspired), he appears with the old bold attitude of dealing with incidents for the sake of imaginative penetration into his theme. The contemporary schools of naturalism and realism will never enroll this artist.

It is on account of his merits that I concede the benefit of the doubt to Leonard for his looseness of plot. He is a story-teller who puts on no airs of rhetoric nor does he lapse into simplism, as has sadly happened with Sherwood Anderson. His prose is firm and personal, and his capture of New England speech is the most successful I know. Compare the talk of his River Bend people of the eighteen-seventies with the dialogue of *Desire Under the Elms,* and you will see that O'Neill caught the meanness, while Leonard has taken the unexpectedness of phrase, the humor, the vigor, the poetry.

What Leonard is after is the essential truth of his characters and of the community they inhabit, and he is not going to let a few reporter's scruples interfere with the divinations of the true artist. He is concerned with Dixi Wardon who has returned to his native town because he was too honest to play the yokel-shearing game of his employer in New York. "I'm like a float or something," he says, "thrown on the surface of a complicated liquid—on the flux of River Bend—to show the currents and perhaps determine the specific gravity." But River Bend is suspicious of her returned son and finally tars and feathers him. Dixi faces the community down and in the end marries Ruth Greer by whom he had had an illegitimate son nine years before. But the great character of the book is not Dixi or Ruth Greer or Esther Stone, the village's independent woman, but old Zenas Wardon ("more Viking or more patriarch?"). He is "an expert in that borderland of behavior where prejudice is indistinguishable from principle". He is New England at the core, mild-eyed and thin-lipped, twisted-minded and powerful, piratical and Christian. In delineating Zenas, Jonathan Leonard has brought back to view the enigmatic character of the earlier Yankee leader which it is the fashion nowadays to simplify into the stock figure of the puritanical hypocrite. *Back to Stay* is a definite guarantee that vigor of conception and style will mark the author's future.

GORHAM B. MUNSON

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THIS DELICATE CREATURE *by Con O'Leary* (ELLIOT HOLT. $2.50)

THIS DELICATE CREATURE opens with what the jacket calls crisp sophistication and closes with a moral conversion. In the first sentence the delicate creature Boda nestles in her lover's arms while her husband is downstairs; in the last she surrenders her lips to her husband. During the intervening period, by a fantastic little device, she has been made to live through the miseries of the people and animals whom she has deliberately or casually exploited. She has been the mouse instead of the cat; the pheasant and the fox instead of the markswoman of the English hunting season; the soldier in the trenches instead of the beautiful patriot who bestows a white feather on the supposed slacker; the seduced parlor-maid instead of the callous mistress who turns her out on the street; the elderly husband instead of the faithless young wife who married for money; and so on through many reversals of rôle up to the last, when she is the old beggar woman instead of the charming Mayfair child whose whim it was to brighten the days of "granny". In her nightmare of identification with the other lives she has touched only to injure, threatening figures rise against her, until "granny in a circle of light stretches out a hand and leads her in peace to her husband". The sophistication is really not very crisp, the fantasy is ingenious rather than imaginative, and the moral lesson has been well-thumbed by the generations. Boda's conversion—or for that matter a similar change of heart in the whole group of leisure-class charmers—would not alter the face of society very profoundly. For all it amounts to is that Boda will now run her wealthy household with more regard for human values, sell her race-horses, possibly stop wearing the skins of animals, and gratify her husband by producing an heir; and that, since he has his position in the county to keep up, is important. A passage or two of denunciation of "our Lady of the paddock and the garden-party and the Daily Camera, our dancing doll, our bathing belle, our bag of scent and lollipop, etc.", reveals the hatred with which the author regards delicate creatures like Boda. They are an unquestioned nuisance, which will continue as long as men feel so violently attracted and repelled by them.

DOROTHY BREWSTER

TOMORROW NEVER COMES *by R. L. Duffus* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $2.50)

MR. DUFFUS has written a book which might have set a style, were it not for C. E. Montague's *Right Off the Map,* which, it must be admitted, has anticipated him. (Mr. Duffus, incidentally, has not read the book in question.) As it is, *Tomorrow Never Comes* will probably end up in the movies; and there are worse fates. There is the fate, for instance, of not being read and this fate Mr. Duffus's book should escape, if it has any luck at all.

The scene of this neat story is Santa Eulalia, a conveniently non-existent republic of Central America. The hero, Rafael, a good-looking young man, (believe it or not) is the son of the chief ecclesiastical personage of the capital, a canon of the cathedral. This fact and a quickly developing three-cornered rivalry, in which Rafael himself, the President of the Republic and the commanding general each attempt to engage the affections of the beautiful Vitoria, combine to cast him for a prominent rôle in the ensuing melodrama. A war, fomented by American interests in the person of Mr. Harris, the agent of a powerful New York firm, has broken out between Santa Eulalia and the neighboring state of Tolosano. As in Mr. Montague's book, the enemy surprises everybody by his regrettably prompt action: the Santa Eulalians are driven back; the capital is about to fall; the army mutinies; but just in the nick of time an aeroplane and a consignment of

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machine guns, forwarded by Mr. Harris's efficient company in New York, arrives; the Santa Eulalians, led by Rafael and his comrade, sweep the enemy before them; the president and the general are killed; Vitoria's virtue is saved; Mr. Harris gets his oil wells and the curtain comes down on a scene of general rejoicing and imminent prosperity.

It is really a fairy tale, you see; and as such the movies could take it over with hardly a change; but though Mr. Duffus has not —as Mr. Montague has—carried his irony very far into the events of the story itself, he has told it all with a twinkle in his eye. All? Well, nearly all; the author is no moralist, and cannot bear to lift his hand against youth and beauty: when they are his subject the gentle irony falters and grows almost wistful. Santa Eulalia is a fairyland, but a modern one, with a sense of humor in its inhabitants; it is a pleasant place to think about when we are far away.

T. S. MATTHEWS

AS FAR AS JANE'S GRANDMOTHER'S
by Edith Olivier (VIKING. $2.50)

As Far as Jane's Grandmother's is a disarming book. At first sight, it appears to be as innocent and dainty a little tale of sheltered lives as one could find to read aloud by the fireside. Its style is perfect, with a demure gaiety, as though this were to be merely a lovely fantasy: the words seem to have been grown in an old-fashioned garden and picked on a morning in early June. And that style continues flawlessly to the last page. But, underneath its apparent ingenuousness, is a terrible story; for Miss Olivier traces, one by one, the events that turned Jane from an ardent, lovely child into an unlovely, empty woman, fearful of life in herself and revolted by any signs of it in others. The observation is as unsparing as the style is gracious.

Jane's grandmother was a woman of strong prejudices and enough money to arrange her life in harmony with them. Having been left a widow after three years of marriage, she had held time still for fifty years, in her house and the park that surrounded it, by the intensity of her unspoken disapproval of everything new. Her daughter, Margaret, had grown up and wilted in her mother's shadow. Margaret's daughter, Jane, after the death of her parents, was absorbed into the same shadow and the sources of her life sucked dry by her grandmother's tenacious roots. Little by little she became incapable of any act, or even feeling, that she imagined would provoke the old lady's disapproval. When Jane fell in love with Julian, the result was not marriage but a nervous breakdown. When the war came and other young women discovered the world, Jane was chastely sequestered on her grandmother's estate. In the years that followed the war, she dreamed of becoming a nun and wore a sackcloth shirt to humiliate the flesh. She had become utterly indecisive, lonely, and hostile to all who lived more fully than herself. After her grandmother's death, she once more met the man she had loved, now a widower; but it was too late. Her grandmother's prejudices were still her conscience. Her hysteria, on finding that Julian and his friends allowed their sons and daughters to go swimming together, in one-piece bathing suits, betrayed the distance at which she lived from life.

You will see at once that this might be a story from any psycho-analyst's case-book. Everything is there but the jargon, for the story is so completely imagined that no psychological language is necessary. The opening paragraph foreshadows the last:

> It was the limit of their nursery walks, and all through their lives it remained for them the most explicit measure of distance. Angela Markham first said it. Living, as she did, in the only other important house in the village, she and her nurse joined Jane on most days when the children were going for their walks, and there was very often a note or a parcel or a letter, to be taken to Jane's grandmother.

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"Well, where did you walk today?" Mr. Markham would say to Angela when she came home to luncheon, and he generally got the expected reply—"As far as Jane's grandmother's."

Obviously, Jane never got beyond her grandmother's. Miss Olivier works in miniature, but on the scale that she has chosen, her touch is unerring.

SARTORIS *by William Faulkner* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.50)

SARTORIS is the name of a Southern family of dare-devils, who carry on a tradition, in each generation, of leading violent lives and coming to early ends, either in the nearest available war or at the hands of local enemies. The Sartorises drink hard, fight hard, and torment their women by their recklessness; their only emotion appears to be pride. The main part of the novel deals with the current Sartoris, a young man of twenty-six, who has failed to get himself killed as an aviator over the German lines, and returns to the dusty Southern town of his fathers in a state of savage hysteria. After trying unsuccessfully to kill himself in a high-powered car, he succeeds—more romantically—by taking up a plane that he knows will crash. The reader cannot help feeling that the real reason for his death is that the tradition expects it of him. Mr. Faulkner seems to view this adolescent Byron, who takes to whiskey with a manly curse because two-thirds of his natural life stretch ahead of him, at his own evaluation. The author tells us that there was a "heritage of rash and heedless men" in the family, and of the name Sartoris he says that "there is death in the sound of it, and a glamorous fatality, like silver pennons downrushing at sunset, or a dying fall of horns along the road to Roncevaux". To this reviewer the Sartorises seemed melodramatic rather than dramatic. Mr. Faulkner has talent, but it is still immature.

LAWRENCE S. MORRIS

DESTINIES *by François Mauriac* (COVICI, FRIEDE. $2.50)

WHEN Mauriac sits down to write a novel, he usually chooses a single theme and develops it logically to a sombre finale. With this formula he has produced excellent novels, strong, austere, bitter, and limited generally to the *landes* and its people whom he knows in such intimate detail. In *Destinies,* however, he has spread himself a little; he has chosen a theme that is less clearcut than usual and which has a hero from a strange world. Somehow, in relaxing his customarily severe limits, a novelist who is noted for his perfect symmetry and classic precision appears to fumble and grow vague.

For once his hero is an exotic, a hot-house bloom, formed and distorted by the poisoned air of Parisian high society. Robert Lagave is one of those persons with fatal eyelashes —destined to be corrupted before they know it, and destined also to have an uncanny power of rousing love and hate. Transplanted to the country outside Bordeaux, he unconsciously awakens autumnal yearnings in the heart of a sedate housewife, while he, meanwhile, is pursuing a passionate idyl of his own. His sweetheart has lived in Paris: she is modern enough to drive her own car, to go after her man, to become engaged without the knowledge of her family—which is going a long way in France. So it is rather surprising that she has never suspected her lover's past, and runs away like a startled schoolgirl at the first hint of dissipation.

The boy goes impulsively to the devil and an early grave; and the two women whose lives he has colored so intensely for a moment relapse into commonplace things. The clouds of glory fade, the practical world possesses them and they join the company of "those corpses that are carried down the stream of life".

Mauriac has never shown more plainly how he is impressed by the permanence of the land and the impermanence of the hu-

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man drama; how desperately he is aware of the skeleton beneath the flesh. He even allows himself to break into aphorisms, which smudge the outlines of the story, and in his philosophic excitement forgets to realize his characters completely. The emphasis is diffused and tragedy slips over into melodrama. It may also be that Mauriac is out of his element in dealing with modern young people, for the really memorable figure in *Destinies* is Elizabeth Gornac, hard-headed provincial matron, who awoke to such fearful tenderness for another woman's son.

THE SEVEN BROTHERS *by Alexis Kivi* (COWARD-MCCANN. $2.50)

THIS classic from Finland can provide the immigration authorities with one more argument for the basic soundness of the Nordic stock. It is the story of seven brothers, powerful, headstrong fellows who defied the Crown and the Lord, as personified in the village rector, and fled to the forest rather than learn their *A B C's*. Eventually, however, they succeeded in taming their wild natures, just as they tamed the wilderness into decent farmland. They managed to learn their alphabet and their catechism; they learned that "industry is the spring of happiness"; they were rewarded with a gift of seven New Testaments from the rector, and the good opinion of all the community. They had no trouble at the last in procuring virtuous wives, who did their duty in the household and produced many sturdy sons on whom the rod was not spared.

The story is told in a mock-heroic vein, after the manner of old Norse sagas that every Scandinavian infant knows by heart. It is humorous in somewhat the same way as Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale* must have been to the readers of courtly romance—only a great deal more local and personal. The history of the seven brawny brothers really does illustrate what might have happened to any epic hero, if he had chanced to be born into the quaint, orderly, home-loving, and God-fearing world of modern Finland. The characters of the seven are admirably differentiated; their speech is at once poetic and homely, salted with popular maxims and metaphors, with legends and superstitions, flavored with a strong feeling for the terror and beauty of Nature.

THE NAKED YEAR *by Boris Pilniak* (PAYSON & CLARKE. $2.50)

WHEN Boris Pilniak wrote about the Russian Revolution, he attempted as far as possible to fit manner to subject matter. His formula was naïve: the best way for an author to produce an effect of chaos was to be as chaotic as he could. This was logic of a sort, easy for everyone to comprehend, and I do not see why he needed to go further and talk about the cult of "formless form".

I suppose he would describe "formless form" as being dynamic rather than plastic, and certainly *The Naked Year* goes off in all directions at once, with breathless intensity and speed. Without sequence or transitions and with a great many cryptic chapter heads and sub-heads, it whirls along, showing individuals and masses in the grip of love, death, famine, fever, madness, fear and lust. There are innumerable characters, frequently with identical names, and no one of them is more important than another. The book is remarkable for the honesty with which it portrays communists and landowners, officials and peasants in a period of naked horror; remarkable for the lyric tenderness which alternates with its realism. It is also abrupt, strident and confused.

ROSE LEE

BANJO *by Claude McKay* (HARPERS. $2.50)

NOT content to leave the Negro at home in Harlem, Mr. McKay now takes him to the docks at Marseilles and observes his behavior amid the scum of a hundred melting pots.

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Banjo (Harpers), advertises itself as a "story without a plot", a fair statement of the case; but if *Banjo* lacks plot, at least it pursues a point deviously but relentlessly. Banjo himself, cotton-field nigger turned soldier, sailor, bum, panhandler and beach boy, holds true to the type Mr. McKay has chosen for him throughout the book. Life presents no great problem to him, nor does it offer much that is worth striving for. Give him four strings to pluck, a tune to sing, wine to drink and, where practicable, a woman to take or leave alone and he is content. He finds no embarrassment in his color because the differences in pigmentation among his fellow humans do not bother him. He lives as it pleases him, letting others attempt the same end and if there is any iron in his soul the years have mellowed it with rust.

So Banjo drifts about the gutters of Marseilles, strumming and drinking and wenching as the mood seizes him. But over against him Mr. McKay sets a certain Ray, a Negro of college education and intellectual aspirations. He finds meaning in the New Negro movement which Banjo scorns. Race is to him a problem upon which the value of his existence depends. Ray struggles always, against urges within himself, against rebellious forces which continually set him at odds with the whole world. He wants neither equality with whites nor condescension from them. Yet, he is not sure exactly what he does want—unless it is perhaps to be accepted at his face value as a human being. About the undeviating Banjo, Ray twists and turns, finally to be converted, where no conversion was particularly sought, to the mere passivity, the free and unhampered negation, of Banjo's method of existence.

In this lies the story; and in the telling Mr. McKay is so convincing as to require no apology either one way or the other. If fault is to be found with the author's manner, let it be that he is more loyal to his characters than they are themselves, that his realism is a shade too natural and his naturalism too real. But such considerations need spoil no one's appreciation of a complex task simply and gustily performed.

RALPH S. BAILEY

FAR WANDERING MEN *by John Russell* (NORTON. $2.50)

THESE ten stories are bound together by what Mr. Russell calls the queerness of the Pacific. Theirs is the material of highly-colored circumstance and swift incident. Nine of them are wrought in the drugged atmosphere of the tropics. With the easy overemphasis of popular fiction they tell themselves. They are competent. They are well made. Some of them are too well made, relying on an unexpected dénouement which is not always unexpected. But behind the facile style can be felt a certain truth. It is the verity of actual experience, the truth of the living model. You feel that Mr. Russell knows his subject and knows how to tell it, but you also wish he could have avoided the use of certain set phrases.

The one tale not set in the tropics has a power which the others lack. The wife of a West Australian sailor is driven to commit suicide because of the hounding attentions of her husband's former shipmate. The widower hunts the object of his revenge to a barren island in the sub-Antarctic. The government tug which has brought the widower to his prey is wrecked on an uncharted reef just as the villain is about to be done in. All hands on the tug are lost. The widower saves the villain and between them they work out their salvation, decking over a twenty-foot dinghy for a four thousand-mile voyage to Australia, subsisting on a cache of supplies left by the government on the island and cruising with a sail improvised from clothing. All this is comparatively unlikely; but what is likely is, when they finally get back to their native town and get dressed in their best Sunday clothes, meeting by accident in a street, they shoot it out. This story is grim and it rings with every-day reality. When Mr. Russell chooses to write about bleak surroundings

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and when he relies on a fundamental motive, he can make your hair stand on end. The rest of the time he is simply entertaining you, which he does well enough.

C. A. CHAPMAN

ALL IN A DAY *by Martin Armstrong* (HARPERS. $2.50)

IN *All in a Day* Mr. Armstrong has departed not only from the trail along which his earlier work has travelled but also from the path hard beaten by other novelists. He has written an introspective and retrospective narrative in which two characters are compellingly and convincingly revealed during the one day that marks the crisis in their lives. Though wholly lacking in action and the high qualities of physical and spiritual drama, and therefore necessarily caviar to the general, the book commends itself to the thoughtful reader who is more concerned with the hidden forces that shape human destiny than with external incidents.

A deterministic philosophy permeates the story: Christopher and Rosamond Brade, caught in the meshes of habit and ruled by powers over which they have no control, seem scarcely responsible for their words or actions; blind fate carries them on toward whatever ruin or fulfillment there is in store for them. In all lives there are clarifying moments when the past impinges upon the present with force enough to shake human automata from the grooves of habit. Such a moment, coming to Christopher as he woke on his fortieth birthday, filled him with a groping understanding of the day's significance. Something within seemed to be about to rouse him from the lethargy in which he had been enduring the unhappiness of his marriage to a woman who not only did not love him but who refused the love he longed to bestow upon her. As the day progresses from the early morning quarrel, with its hint of imminent crisis, to Christopher's departure at midnight, both Christopher and Rosamond, moving mechanically through their customary routines, relive the epochal moments in their lives. It is this reliving, clearer because of lengthened perspective than the actuality of past events, that enables Christopher to end the long agony of his marriage, with its muted hostilities and crampings of the spirit. In the light of the vividness of Christopher's and Rosamond's reminiscences, the title is somewhat of a misnomer. Though all in a day or even all in a moment Christopher's decision is made, a whole life in graphic episodes is relived.

The prose is firm and dignified and full of those cadences that fall pleasantly upon the inner ear. In the description of the English countryside Mr. Armstrong's style is at its best, pulsating with the rhythm of physical beauty. The colors, the sounds, the fragrances, the very movements of the air, the author succeeds in passing on to the reader. On a shelf of recent fiction *All in a Day* should occupy a place of prominence.

A MODERN GIRL *by W. B. Trites* (STOKES. $2.50)

RUTHLESSLY waving aside its title, this book is a war story in which the interest centers in aviation and not in the modern girl. The novel is vastly unlike *The Gypsy,* which came last year from the typewriter of W. B. Trites. It has more characters, more external drama, more action than the earlier book; but it lacks the beauty of language. Yet the choppy style conforms to the requirements of the somewhat disconnected incidents of which the story consists.

The characters move in a haze—puppets manipulated behind a screen of netting. The horrors of the war are there—the stench of the trenches, filth, disease, cowardice, incredible heroism, elemental fear, hatred and bestiality, mutilation, death agonies, ghastly wanderings through No Man's Land—but the horrors are not felt keenly by the reader because the characters are nebulous. The story

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of aviation during the war is graphically told, but the story of Jack Stafford, the aviator, does not plough deep enough. The pictures of Hilda March—in the cafés, at Mrs. Custer's Officers' Club, in the gay life at Nice, as the girl smokes opium at the Princess Slavinsky's—are vividly painted. But Hilda herself, despite her beauty, her waywardness, her heroic effort at regeneration, lacks any real poignancy.

Yet, notwithstanding its vagueness of characterization, *A Modern Girl* makes a definite contribution to the literature of the war. Not only does it deal accurately with aviation but also it holds up to just ridicule phases of so-called relief work untouched by other chroniclers. Here and there throughout the book are scenes that rise to the level of high drama. Among these are Jack Stafford's encounter with his first German plane, Cord Farrell's rescue of the wounded Jack—necessitating the gruelling tramp through German territory, and Hilda's regeneration in the flames of the burning hospital. The last chapter, in which Jack and Hilda find each other on Armistice Night, is a masterpiece of repression. *A Modern Girl,* in spite of its apparent defects, deserves to be placed in the first rank of war novels.

LIV *by Kathleen Coyle* (DUTTON. $2.50)

REBECCA WEST in a cleverly worded preface has, it seems to me, rather overestimated the value of this book, in which faults and virtues are incongruously mingled. The poetic sensitivity of which she speaks is apparent. Yet the quality struggles through word vehicles inadequate for full expression. The girl Liv, though possessing mildly those qualities that have characterized Scandinavian heroines, appears a pale and anemic descendant of those Ibsen women who solved their problems in a manner calculated to shock the civilized world. The first half of the book, despite the undeniable charm of its Norwegian setting, is not entirely satisfying, and surely a trip from Norway to Paris for a young woman of independent age and independent income is not a matter that can be entertainingly stretched across eighty-six printed pages. Still the author seems to have within her the power to develop into a distinguished writer, though *Liv* itself falls somewhat short of real distinction.

The theme of the story is as old as the *Odyssey,* youth's craving for high adventure. Before settling into a commonplace marriage, Liv, like her aunt Sonja before her and unlike her unimaginative mother, longs to take the grand tour, which means for her the revelation of life. Having found Paris and a lover who is free to offer her only an illicit love, she returns home to fall again into the ways of her people and perhaps to nurse for the rest of her days an aching sense of unfulfillment. A pathetic figure but scarcely a heroic one, seething with emotions which can never break through the inhibitions which encase her. Blindly groping, she is swept into the conscienceless life of an artists' group in Paris, and, still groping, she is swept back to Norway. Undoubtedly the character is accurately portrayed. Yet a better heroine would be Liv's friend, Barbra Grondahl, painting her red foxes and drinking her cup down to the dregs.

EUDORA RAMSAY RICHARDSON

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BIOGRAPHY

KING HENRY VIII *by Francis Hackett* (LIVERIGHT. $5.00)

PRAISE is due Mr. Hackett, the historian, for his admirable chronicle of Europe in the first half of the Sixteenth Century. In a prelude of fifty pages he sums up the transition, not without labor, of the medieval world, dominated by the idea of universal Church and universal State, into the modern world, dominated by the idea of national dynasties and the balance of power.

Mr. Hackett displays with a lucidity beyond cavil the eternal fluctuations of the diplomacy of the Emperors, Maximilian and Charles V, of the French kings, Louis XII and Francis I, and of the two English Henrys. He details the secret treaties and slippery alliances, the waving of war and the evasion of war with truce and parley, spider-weavings going on above the heads of the people, which must be followed in order to understand the politics of Henry VIII's reign.

National the wars were, in a sense, though they were fought largely by mercenaries, and nations were grafted onto each other by royal marriages, or promises of royal marriages more powerful still. Henry VII "announced the re-entry of England into Europe" by marrying England to Spain. Henry VIII in his turn offered England to Spain, but when Spain married Portugal England betrothed itself to France. England likewise married the League of Protestant princes, but repented of it and put them away.

Against the shifting European background shine vivid pictures of princes, reformers, nobles, popes, queens and humanists: guardians of the old order, and champions of the New Learning.

In setting the stage for his drama, Mr. Hackett as historian leaves nothing to be desired; but the unfolding of action is another matter. In the charged atmosphere of the parvenu Tudor Court at Whitehall, Greenwich, or Hampton Court, Mr. Hackett relaxes, and gives us, not fiction, not falsehood, but romance with the generous allowance of historic license conceded to the psychological approach. He inclines his ear to voices in audience chamber, ante-room and vestibule; he listens on the staircase and in window recesses, catching his characters on the wing, while favorites enjoy their little day and foreign ambassadors keep journals.

The character called Henry VIII emerges as a monster with a dropsical ego and a very Moloch of a conscience to which he sacrifices truth, virtue, innocence and piety, with an appalling relish. His wives and queens are observed richly and ardently (wherever possible) on their progress to and from the royal couch. And so individual are these characters made—from the tragic Catherine of Aragon, the high-mettled Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, retiring and orthodox, Anne of Cleves, phlegmatic and Protestant, Catherine Howard, tempted as well as tempting, and Catherine Parr, the well-tempered shock-absorber—that the reader has no excuse for regarding them as cardinal numbers ever again.

The virtue of this treatment lies in added color and vivacity; its danger in exaggerated preoccupation with dramatic contrast. Even with the novelist's brief for exploring the secret soul the author does not, on the evidence, convince one of Henry's "morbid sense of danger", his "vulgar and purblind soul" and "lascivious mind".

The Tudors were bound to have heirs or perish, and Henry's six marriages were dy-

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nastic. Considering that four of his queens were plain and one inherited, they should not count against him for debauchery. He was ruthless in a brutal age, and he exactly suited his people. He was the strongest man in England, who, learning despotism from two tutors of genius, yet remained their master. He had few guards, no standing army, no great families devoted to the crown; and if the mass of his subjects had really been discontented under his rule they could have deposed him. As it was, the England of that day cared more for prosperity than for freedom, and its conscience was in its pocket. So Henry's conscience could follow its peculiar dictates with impunity.

We have no patience nowadays with history on stilts, with rhetoric and purple passages; but we foster our own faults of style in journalistic fine writing. Mr. Hackett has a gift for simple and powerful phrasing which makes all the more distressing such blemishes as: "The fitful deliciousness and immorality of emancipation that crisped and thrilled men's hearts". Here and there, in addition, for the sake of vividness, he mixes his tenses to the confusion of the reader: "When Francis topples . . . into the degradation of his Madrid imprisonment, Charles hated him too deeply not to demand his pound of flesh". Also, to use slang, to designate the Holy Roman Empire as "a trade name for Germany more or less", to coin a misnomer like "Pope-Emperor" and to talk of "the blonde princess and the brunette Papacy" are faults almost unpardonable.

But in spite of certain flaws and inconsistencies, *Henry VIII* is a work which will be read today and is, in many respects, worthy to be read tomorrow.

OLGA KATZIN

RABELAIS *by Anatole France* (HENRY HOLT. $5.00)

WHEN Anatole France had turned over to his secretary, M. Brousson, the sack of notes he had gathered through many years for his *Life of Joan of Arc* and utter failure to find a long sought reference had dampened their zeal for the work, he spoke of writing a book on Rabelais. Rabelais had served him as a recreation from the days when Professor Bergeret first found oblivion of the Dreyfus Affair in the pages of this humorist and his predecessors. To his helper the novelist showed the bookcase filled with Rabelaisiana, standing next to the shelves lined with works on the Maid of Orleans. "That is the poison, mysticism," he remarked; "and this the antidote, free humor." After the Maid had been duly "restored to humanity" and her *Life* published, he showed that the last of the years devoted to her were also devoted to the Curé of Meudon, by publishing immediately *Les Contes de Jacques Tournebroche* and *Les sept femmes de la Barbe-bleue,* in some tales of which the humor of Gargantua is only too apparent.

So when in the same year, 1909, he was invited to give a course of lectures in Argentina, it was natural that he should choose Rabelais for his subject. He wrote a series of popular lectures, excluding from them all that was likely to give offense: in other words, the obscenity so characteristic of the author and his age. But in spite of his care, he opened his course, in Buenos Aires, before an audience of some three hundred "baldpates"—if we are to believe his secretary—the women and the faithful generally having been warned away by the fulminations of the clergy! At any rate he had to change his subject and flatter the Argentinians by recounting his impressions of their country.

Was it the hostile reception given to his *Joan of Arc*—the dishonesty in using his materials of which he was accused—that made him keep the lectures in his portfolio after his return so that they were first published, four years after he died, in *L'Illustration,* and in the seventeenth volume of his complete works? If so, this timidity has long suppressed a most readable account of the

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great satirist whose influence is so pervasive in most of France's later books. To be sure we know very little, indeed, about Rabelais: even the date and place of his birth have been the subject of much discussion. There are many gaps in the records; what we really know is set forth in two score pages by the French scholar, M. Plattard, in his *Etat présent des études rabelaisiennes* (*Soc. d'édition Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 1927*). So the greater part of this book is devoted to a summary of the Gargantua and the Pantagruel, an expurgated summary, with much comment on the trail of the master through French literature. The background receives less attention than in the recent *Life of Villon* by D. B. Wyndham Lewis.

But Anatole France was too truly a hedonist to affront the labors of scholarship; he delved in old books for thrilling impressions, and to such purpose that he learned how to write the French of Rabelais's time and to expand a story of his into the comedy, *The Man who Married a Dumb Wife*. Such a talent guarantees the spirit of this popular book on Rabelais, which one reads with an interest in no wise diminished by the fact that it breaks no new ground. The translation by Ernest Boyd is well done, and the illustrations by Edy Legrand have yielded, under the hands of P. and A. Baudier, woodcut work as vivid as that of Doré or Robida.

LEWIS PIAGET SHANKS

BRYAN *by M. R. Werner* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $3.50)

WRITTEN primarily for a popular weekly magazine, Mr. Werner's biography of the Commoner is in the main a swiftly flowing narrative embellished with a considerable number of passages cut from the subject's own story, as completed by his wife. He does not seek to add or detract much from Bryan's own explanations of himself or the newspaper accounts of his untiring activities. Some few discoveries are made that have escaped the eyes of others who have essayed estimates of the Boy Orator of the Platte, who was so long a disturbing element in the affairs of the Democratic Party. After the first defeat in 1896, Henry George cried out, "The people have lost again", but Mr. Werner holds it doubtful if the "people" would have won anything had Bryan been victor. For Bryan, much as he felt for the common man, "also believed in the capitalist system, and it was only by means of a more or less complete change in that system that the so-called people would have won anything worth winning. He would have advocated an income tax, arbitration of industrial disputes, and other palliatives, but he would not have attacked the disease, for he dared not believe it was a disease". The author, had he taken time for a little delving, might have added proof to assertion by revealing the mine-owning combination that shifted its support to Bryan after it had failed to force free silver into the Republican platform upon which William McKinley was nominated and elected. Pathetic evidence is given, however, that thousands thought the candidate brought the evangel which was to separate them from their woes. This character of a full-voiced Messiah he never lost, and not a few of his contentions won. That he took them from others does not matter. The man was a good judge of psychological moments.

For one who could and did sometimes spout sixty thousand words a day "the Great Commoner was one of the most secretive politicians who have ever played the game in America", according to Mr. Werner. This assertion is not accompanied by proof. His outward exertions were always plain. If the writer had any evidence of sleek second-story work it would have been well to produce it, and it would have added interest to the volume. Certainly he was not enough of a politician in 1912, when Theodore Roosevelt split the Republicans, to gain the nomination upon which Woodrow Wilson rode to victory, even after he had made it known

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by a letter to Adrian H. Joline that he sought to have something done, "at once dignified and effective, to knock Mr. Bryan once for all into a cocked hat". To Col. E. M. House Mr. Werner accords credit for binding up the wound thus made. The *Intimate Letters* furnish the material. In Mr. Werner's excellent story of the Baltimore convention he gives no evidence of any ability on the part of Bryan to make himself effective, either secretly or openly. He was equally lacking in potential force at Madison Square Garden in 1924, even though the futile Democrats on that brainless occasion tacked his brother Charles onto the tail of the ticket headed by John W. Davis. Mr. Werner is inclined to belittle Bryan as Secretary of State in the first Wilson Cabinet and to swallow the vapid views of Washington correspondents who are usually too lazy to get anything right and prefer to recite rumors instead of waiting for results. The men he urged for appointment in many cases were of a better scale than those selected by Wilson himself, and we have lived to see his much maligned conditional peace treaties become effective as the germs for those successfully pushed through by Secretary Kellogg. If he was lampooned as ridiculous for serving grape juice at a state dinner, he lived to see the industry by which it is produced become hugely prosperous through prohibition, the next cause he was to shoulder.

"Deep down in his heart," Mr. Werner avers, "Bryan had an utter contempt for education, because it was undemocratic, and because he was, in spite of some years of formal instruction, uneducated". He "resented fiercely the activities of scientists", and this resentment led to his share in the Dayton episode and his death. The Commoner liked money and accumulated a comfortable supply. He never slept in hedgerows or uplifted without scrip or purse. When Keith, Frederick the Great's marshal, died, his brother observed: "He has left me a noble heritage. He was master of a province and his estate is seven guineas". Bryan's was $1,111,948.90—not a little of it gained from assisting the Florida boom. Were complaint to be lodged against Mr. Werner's work, it is that he has taken too much from others and not given his readers enough of his clever self.

DON C. SEITZ

SWINBURNE *by Samuel C. Chew* (LITTLE, BROWN. $3.50)

WE MUST congratulate Professor Chew on making his *Swinburne* an honest, conscientious, scholarly work. It is not a cream puff biography or a muck-raking sensation, though it would not be too difficult to do a pseudo-Freudian exposé on Swinburne. Professor Chew very wisely leaves that to the scandal-mongers. Using the life of Swinburne as a background, the book is primarily a series of interwoven essays in literary criticism. Good use has been made of the Swinburne researches that have been especially productive in the last six years with De Reul's *L'Oeuvre de Swinburne* and Lafourcade's recent *La Jeunesse de Swinburne*. Professor Chew's book is up to the minute, treating the flaming-haired young Algernon and the more sombre bard of Putney in the light of modern findings, though the author's original contribution is singularly meagre. Even his treating Swinburne's dramas and prose works at length is not such an innovation as some reviewers would think, for Professor De Reul devoted about a quarter of his definitive books to such a task; at the same time, our author has brought a keen critical mind and a sympathetic insight to bear upon old problems.

The new view of "the greatest poet of our realms" is very readable and, while it may not convert the illiterati, it will not, at least, give an incorrect impression of the author of *Faustine* and *Dolores* and *Félise*. Professor Chew or the publishers have, however, made a mistake in cluttering the book with footnotes. At least half the notes could very well

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have been incorporated in the body of his text.

As for the rest, the book is usually sound. It may assign too high a place to *Siena.* I should not place that poem in the same class with *The Triumph of Time,* the matchless choruses from *Atalanta* or the *Prelude* to *Tristram of Lyonesse,* but that is a question of individual opinion. The book recedes from De Reul's well-taken position that Swinburne had as much thought substance as a great poet need have. A more frequent use of the Swinburne letters might also have been made advantageously as explanation and comment on the poetry. Such a use would, I think, more clearly and definitely have fixed the indissoluble bond between the poet and his work. It would, also, have showed how the poetry was part of his reactions, thoughts, experiences.

The exigencies of space have undoubtedly limited the quotations and we miss those deathless strophes, quoted, requoted and never quoted enough. Although the relationship between Swinburne and Carducci is mentioned, I am surprised no notice of Miss Beulah Amram's article, "Swinburne and Carducci" (*Yale Review*) is made. Professor Chew does take up, however, though perhaps not as fully as we might wish, the relationship of Swinburne's thought to that of Whitman and Emerson. But the sameness of philosophic concept, in back of a good deal of the mid-Nineteenth Century poetry, might well be the subject of another book.

Whether Professor Chew is justified in saying, "He is not of the first order of poets nor, perhaps, even of second rank", will be doubted by many of us who place Swinburne with Shelley as the greatest pure poet in the English tongue. At any rate, the book will serve to introduce to many the supreme poet of youth, passion, fire; the "sea mew" to whom the sea was peculiarly his own province, the Englishman to whom Italy was a passion, the poet to whom life was a joy perennially.

HENRY LEFFERT

THE EXQUISITE TRAGEDY: AN INTIMATE LIFE OF JOHN RUSKIN *by Amabel Williams-Ellis* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $3.50)

"RUSKIN the art critic, the man who called his books by Latin names, lived like the saints. He is held in the memory of poor people who only have a vague impression of somebody with a high cravat and whiskers, who came down notably on their side. Fame so vague is almost indestructible." These sentences from the preface of *The Exquisite Tragedy,* though they state a fact, and one that would have given Ruskin great comfort, are more true of England than of America. Here he has another kind of immortality. He lives in the somewhat precarious world of the college classroom and, conceivably, in the minds of men and women who read him there. And he would have found great comfort in this remembrance, too.

Whether a life that is remembered by the poor of one country and the youth of another was a tragedy might be questioned. But in a narrower sense, Ruskin's eighty-one years, as recorded in this book, certainly do show a mingling of pity and fear which is tragic. He won a position unique in Victorian England as an arbiter of taste, but he wished to be more; he wished to be an arbiter of morals. With his stupendous talent, his astoundingly analytical mind, his unexcelled gift of language, he might have had his wish, if his early life had been different. At least such is the opinion of the present biographer, and so Ruskin himself hinted in his most appealing book, *Præterita.*

His tragedy was that he could not break out of the spiritual isolation which prevented him from ever moving with the main currents of his age. Three times he failed in love: a hundred times he failed in great projects into which he poured his time, his money, his very life-blood. "The doctors say I went mad from overwork," he wrote very near the end. "I went mad because nothing came of

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my work. . . . The enduring calamity under which I toil is humiliation—resisted necessarily by dangerous and lonely pride." His acute critic and friend, Charles Eliot Norton, traced his failure to his boyhood: "The only child of a domineering woman, tenderly loved by her, and petted, ruled, disciplined, and spoiled by her, and loved and petted by his father, his moral sense early and morbidly over-developed, his self-will and his vanity encouraged as he grew up by the devotion of father, mother, and friends". Truly, as Mrs. Williams-Ellis says, such an upbringing leaves its mark. Her book is an impressive apologue for parents, as well as an instructive tract for publicists.

Although *The Exquisite Tragedy* discloses few new facts about Ruskin, it gives to his life a fresh proportion and emphasis. It is admirably written, with dignity, feeling and humor. The author extenuates nothing, but neither does she condescend or condemn. Her book gives a fair but clear-sighted analysis of Ruskin's art-teaching, and an especially interesting estimate of his political thought. Concerning the latter, she shows that it is related at bottom to Russian communism or bolshevism, but she also shows why Ruskin could never have approved of Marx and Lenin and their social revolution. Altogether, the book can be recommended heartily to those who wish a shorter introduction to Ruskin than the standard lives of Collingwood and Cook. It is a model for the better kind of popular biography.

R. M. GAY

LAST CHANGES LAST CHANCES *by H. W. Nevinson* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $5.00)

HENRY W. NEVINSON'S *Last Changes Last Chances* is the final panel in the triptych of his autobiography. It ranks with the two earlier volumes in charm and matter while it completes the self-portrait of a sturdy fighter well known and loved in England and America.

Mr. Nevinson tells us here of the Gallipoli campaign, the pre-Armistice fighting in France and the post-war "trouble" in Ireland. In all of these he was a war correspondent and follows his confrère, Sir Philip Gibbs, in believing that now is the time to tell the whole of what he saw.

American readers will remember Mr. Nevinson's *Farewell to America,* that slender volume with which he left us nearly ten years ago. Today he writes in a sadly altered vein after his experiences at the Washington Conference. He quits our shores with no such friendly *vale* as on the earlier departure. Perhaps it is the measure of the change in feeling of all Englishmen toward the United States during the past five years that our kindly critic of earlier days should turn so caustic now.

Nevinson always tempers his great love for England and the English with a lively sense of justice for the under-dog. He says, when taunted with being a champion of lost causes, that he has only to wait long enough to find that the cause is won. And he writes with a measured rhythm which carries the delighted reader from page to page until in surprise he finds that so thick a book has been so quickly read.

MARY D. BLANKENHORN

PLAIN PEOPLE *by E. W. Howe* (DODD, MEAD. $3.00)

HERE is the story of our most famous Main Street newspaper editor, the shrewd, wise and curious-minded Ed Howe, who for fifty years made the Atchison *Globe* famous in most of the states of the Union. It is, as its title promises, a plain tale about multitudes of plain people, stretching back into the misty wilderness of memory of the days before the war. Mr. Howe is completely honest, and his keen eyes seem never to be dimmed by a rosy glow of "those were the days" as he looks back across eighty years of life as a plain American.

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The first part of the book is the most interesting, the days of fights between rebel boys and federals in small Missouri towns, of long hours of work as a printer, a hand typesetter, of wonderful wanderings with strange characters all over the wild mushroom west. Mr. Howe never strains his memory. When he does not remember he says so. Would that he could remember more. The figures of his father, his mother, all the people of the early days, are as figures on the edge of a fog, which flash into clear view for a moment and then retreat into memory's haze.

Mr. Howe, being completely honest, does not build any legend about his early days. His view of his own family is, to say the least, impartial. This unromantic, sharp-eyed, but not untimely vision stays with him throughout the book. One cannot help liking the way he talks about himself, with a detached pride, an amused mockery, a fatherly interest for an often foolish and gullible young man.

Toward the end Mr. Howe is more reflective. This part of the book, a pleasant porch on which he seems to be sitting and looking backward, is not quite so interesting as the first. But *Plain People* is a real document. There ought to have been more of it, and it is a pity Mr. Howe was able to remember and set down only a fraction of the engrossing details of a very remarkable American life.

ROBERT LITTELL

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POETRY

ANGELS AND EARTHLY CREATURES *by Elinor Wylie* (KNOPF. $2.50)

POEMS *by Charles Norman* (KNOPF. $2.00)

THE FATE OF THE JURY *by Edgar Lee Masters* (APPLETON. $2.50)

CAVENDER'S HOUSE *by Edwin Arlington Robinson* (MACMILLAN. $1.50)

A RECENT book on the nature of poetry propounded the theory that poetry, if it was to fulfill its true function, must be, in the deepest sense, religious; and that it could only, or best, be religious by being a poetry of "acceptance" or "yea-saying". The theory is a useful and quite tenable one, provided one is careful to avoid too straitened a notion of what it is that one means by "acceptance". There is a sense in which the most tragic of poetic negations is ultimately and profoundly an affirmation: Baudelaire, who curses the world, and finds it evil, nevertheless unwittingly does it magnificent homage: Shakespeare, for whom perpetually "chaos is come again", made such a thing of chaos as Milton never approached with his Paradise: tragedy and the sense of horror are among man's deepest obeisances to the unknown or unintelligible. Is it an exaggeration to say that poetry has always, or almost always, been at its indefinable finest when it has been, confessedly, the cry of the lost or the damned or the doubting? In "Dover Beach" Matthew Arnold yielded to a moment's despair; his sense of security in Victorian optimism and the wide tradition of the humanities was for an instant lost; and at once he struck a deeper poetic note than was sounded by any of his more famous poetic contemporaries—deeper, for that matter, than was sounded usually by himself.

These reflections come naturally to any reader of contemporary poetry. For the past twenty years, poetry has shown a powerful undercurrent of what one might call cynicism, or despair, or irony, or downright nihilism. There have, it is true, been plenty of yea-sayers: but in the main the yea-sayers have been a good deal overshadowed by their less cheerful brothers, who have been dealing, or appearing to deal, somewhat more strenuously and honestly, if not always more successfully, with the whole rich scale of the actual. The four new books of verse which are at present under review—by Mr. Robinson, Mr. Masters, Miss Wylie, and Mr. Norman—are cases very much in point. If the first three of these poets have, on the whole, been more successful than most of their contemporaries, it is in large part due to the fact that they have not been content to make of their poetry a mere prettification of some small pink segment of the world, but, rather, have used it as the medium of a more or less profound questioning. Mr. Robinson, of course, has had his urbanities, his lighter and gayer or more frankly "romantic" moments; but his *Man Against the Sky,* the poem in which he most severely concentrated the vein of deep scepticism which has run through all of his work, remains perhaps by no accident the finest thing he has done. In this he came closest to a frank expression of the sense of futility which has hung like a cloud over the present era; and the poem at once took on a force and depth and grandeur which has nowhere else in his work been quite so apparent. His longer narrative poems—*Merlin* is perhaps the best—have been dignified by a fine sense of the tragic; but in these the

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tragic and sceptical elements have been more dispersed, the questioning attitude more diffused and less emphatic. In *Cavender's House,* his new narrative, one feels that this process of diffusion has perhaps gone too far. The theme is such a one as Henry James or Hawthorne might have used for a long short story: a man who has murdered his wife, in a panic of jealous suspicion, argues the case with his conscience, his conscience taking the form of his wife's ghost: and this debate, in Cavender's "house", or mind, is the poem. It is a little bit thin; there is too much mere dialogue and too little scene; and while the poem as a whole is skilfully managed, one comes away from it feeling a little empty-handed. Mr. Robinson's curious dry euphuism, his too careful balances and repetitions, his elaborate bandyings of set phrases to and fro between the speakers, like alternating themes in a piece of music, becomes monotonous and cloying; and, by reminding one so forcibly of all the other conversations in all his other poems, weakens one's belief in the actuality of the two present protagonists.

Mr. Masters reverses the situation. His new poem is a kind of epilogue to *Doomsday Book*. Psychologically, and from the point of view of the actual, it is almost wholly admirable: it is simply packed with detail, swarms with real people and real scenes, conquers one's incredulity with the reportorial exactness of a newspaper or a human document. In short, it comes close to being a first-rate story and a first-rate revelation of the American scene. It reads itself easily and swiftly and it gives us half a dozen people who are as real as our neighbors. Its defects are technical and esthetic. The verse is loose and prosaic—at times it is little more than prose chopped up into ten-syllable lengths. And Mr. Masters still has his old fault of taste when he attempts to be "poetic": what he achieves at such moments is a pretentious pseudo-poetry in which the usual bathos is hardly offset by an occasional phrase which catches a real magic. Nevertheless, it must be noted that these defects do not prevent one from reading the poem with pleasure; nor do they much figure in one's after-sense of the poem; one takes away from it a definite and vigorous attitude, a bitter sense of reality; and that is saying a great deal.

In Miss Wylie's posthumous book, and Mr. Norman's first *Poems,* we also find a deep note of scepticism, but this time in lyric form. Miss Wylie has left us a handful of poems which are among the best and most individual of her generation. She united a keen, logical and metaphysical sense with a real gift for image: and to these she brought a fine skill in form. The tone of *Angels and Earthly Creatures* is curiously and disturbingly valedictory: it is almost as if she had foreseen her death. So much is this the case that one can with difficulty read these new poems and preserve the necessary "esthetic distance". In five or six of the sonnets, however, and in as many of the other poems—notably "This Corruptible", "The Lie", "The Loving Cup"—one feels safe in saying that she is almost at her best. Like Emily Dickinson, she had a real kinship with the poetry of the Seventeenth Century.

Mr. Charles Norman is a newcomer of considerable promise. He has a real feeling for words: he handles blank verse and the heroic couplet with delicacy and eloquence: and if he can outgrow a tendency to use stock poetic phrases and poetic properties—the twilights and purples and sunsets and dreams—and can shake off certain rather obvious contemporary influences, he might give us some first-rate work. His eloquence is perhaps at present a danger to him: it tempts him to go on with a theme beyond its natural stopping-place. A little more succinctness in idea—a few more bare bones—will not destroy, but rather will enhance, the effect of richness which is natural to him.

CONRAD AIKEN

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ESSAYS AND CRITICISM

MUSIC AT MIDNIGHT *by Muriel Draper* (HARPERS. $3.50)

DR. JOHNSON found music "the costliest of rackets". It is diverting to wonder what he would have said and done if he had happened to survive into the Twentieth Century and had lived in the rear of No. 19, Edith Grove, London, where Muriel Draper and her husband, Paul, dwelt in the years just before the War. It was the habit of Mr. and Mrs. Draper to assemble pianists, violinists, 'cellists, singers, and other disturbers of the peace in their studio and to make music ruthlessly between midnight and dawn—sometimes until 6:30 in the morning. "Those neighbors who slept (?) with their windows open just over the also open skylight in the roof of No. 19 *A*," writes Mrs. Draper cheerfully in her diverting volume of reminiscences, "were the most violent in their protestations, even staging a public demonstration by blowing policemen's whistles, shooting off torpedoes, and filling the night air with hootings and rattles. They were answered by John Warner and Arthur Rubinstein playing a Bach Prelude and Fugue for four hands at the piano. Bach is stirring enough played by two hands—by four, it is not conducive to sleep".

It must have been delightful to sit as a listener in the Drapers' candle-lit, smoke-filled music-room, with Thibaud, Casals, Lionel Tertis, Felix Salmond, and Arthur Rubinstein playing great chamber music, and to remain for coffee, scrambled eggs, and "raspberries and strawberries in big bowls" at a six or seven or eight o'clock breakfast; yet even those of us who care for music cannot but feel some measure of sympathy for the indignant neighbor who wrote to Mrs. Draper and begged her piteously to "have all playing stopped at a reasonable hour", as she "must quite understand how very trying it is to be defrauded of one's night's rest".

"A reasonable hour!" There was no such thing at 19 Edith Grove in those days. Reasonableness goes by the board when one may gather into one's music-room at will a company of such artists as Cortot, Casals, Tertis, Ysaye, who will play for the simple pleasure of playing. A "racket" these gifted persons doubtless made—from the standpoint of poor Mr. "J. Ostrerog", the neighbor deprived of sleep; but it was not a costly one (save for the champagne and the caviar and the cigars and the morning berries). All that the Drapers had to do was to spread abroad among the elect the fact that the woodfire was lit in the studio at Edith Grove, the piano tuned, the music-stands in place, the eggs ready for the matutinal chafing-dish; and artists of international reputation would flock there and sing upon their instruments like the morning stars, until (to the distress of J. Ostrerog) the morning stars became the risen sun.

Mrs. Draper's book recounts the diversions of one who was more than a stalker of musical lions. She seems genuinely to have loved music, and to have loved the fun of calling it forth in her own way and under conditions that were close to ideal. She has recorded in this amusing and communicative book her memories of the years in which she was hostess to music-makers and painters and men of letters. She has the evocative touch. Like Meredith, she can sometimes "spring imagination with a word or phrase". She writes with her eye on the object, and she kindles it at times into incandescence.

No one who knew Henry James needs to

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be told of the validity of such a thumbnail sketch as this, for example, in which the bodily and the spiritual man are summoned into life:

I saw him one long last time [in London at the beginning of the War]. Invalided, sickened with a grief and distress that need no retelling, he heard my news. After an unforgettable silence, he said: "So, my child, my very dear child, you are not staying me out. You are returning to that America we. . . ." Here his pause was not for lack of words, but the more clearly to convey the unspoken. And then—"Ah! Well—perhaps one day I may do some faint, far justice to all this,"—with a wave of the arm that encircled the room and everything that had ever been seen, spoken, or heard in it—"to all this you have given me—to all this," and he patted my hand. He did not say good-bye, but sledged slowly, sadly, wisely out, the domed head disappearing like a silvered sun at the top of the stairs. I never saw him again.

But one wishes that Mrs. Draper might have had the benefit of some friendly critical eye, for her writing is subject to strange aberrations. She attributes the *"Gesu gespracht* passages" (*sic*) to the B minor Mass of Bach instead of to the St. Matthew Passion, and elsewhere she speaks of *"Ich Grolle Nicht* by Schubert"! And Mrs. Draper is sometimes capable of rickety grammar, despite her gift of vivid evocation.

LAWRENCE GILMAN

SWORDS AND ROSES *by Joseph Hergesheimer* (KNOPF. $3.50)

"ROMANTIC. A word, I believe, that describes a complete agreement between reality and desire." This definition, which occurs on page twenty-four of Mr. Hergesheimer's latest book, sums up his more recent work quite adequately. It certainly defines the concept which integrates these sketches of some of the more romantic figures of the Confederacy, embedded in a running history of the events in which they played parts. It is possible now to see that Mr. Hergesheimer is a dreamer over past history. He is alien to the day he lives in. He finds no color in it. The past, he professes by his practice to believe, had color. It represents the union of reality and desire he admires. He views it with "regret and admiration".

The results of his meditations on the vanished past are pleasant enough reading. Nevertheless, it is impossible to stir up any tremendous admiration for the achievement they are alleged to represent. To be sure, they are not mere wish-fulfilments lacking in a relation to reality. They are, if anything, too cluttered up with mere unilluminated fact. Though Mr. Hergesheimer makes it clear how tenuous was the quality of the life he admires, how valueless, in the last analysis, the types it produced, he still gives to that life and those types an admiration that is sincere, if misguided. Is there any significance in the fact that he chose to portray them as they appeared at the moment of death?

To understand the past is one thing. That is the utility of the past for the thinker. To admire the past is another and quite different thing. But to indicate a profound distaste for the present by projecting oneself permanently into the past is merely a pleasant exercise of the imagination and quite without importance to anyone but oneself. Mr. Hergesheimer has permitted his personal nostalgia for a society of immense decorative interest, governed by ideals of conduct far removed from our own, more romantic and more appealing to the imagination of one who sees the world in terms of decoration and color, to dominate his work. Unless the style of *Swords and Roses* charms the reader, what general interest has the book? Fact is not here translated into fiction even. The book consists of essays and is classified as *belles-lettres*. The subject of the essays are William Lowndes Yancey, Mrs. Jefferson Davis, Pierre Beauregard, Albert Sidney Johnston, John Newland Maffitt, Nathan B. Forrest, Belle Boyd and J. E. B. Stuart. These

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essays are preceded by a general sketch of the social situation of which the figures were the expression and followed by one of a typical foot soldier of the Confederate Army.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN

THE DILEMMA OF AMERICAN MUSIC *by Daniel Gregory Mason* (MACMILLAN. $3.00)

ONE of the fondest musical beliefs cherished in America today is the conviction that if an American composer is to write great music he must build with native material, expressing in the process thoughts and emotions peculiar in their essence to his compatriots. It is this credo which largely accounts for the interest in jazz and in negro folk-songs which have been raging for sometime in high musical places throughout the land.

In *The Dilemma of American Music and Other Essays,* Daniel Gregory Mason has the sane hardihood to expose this fashionable and juvenile jingoism and to declare from an adult, civilized and cosmopolitan point of view that "there must be possible to us as many musical personalities as there are possible combinations and permutations of vital traditions. Therefore, when MacDowell meets and assimilates German romanticism, when Loeffler meets and assimilates French impressionism, when Powell meets and assimilates Anglo-American folk-song, let us not cavil and define, let us rather rejoice and applaud. Were a single one of them to be forcibly 'Americanized', music in America would be the poorer. Music in America is the richer for each and all of them; and music in America is a thing far more worth working for than 'American music'".

Other topics discussed in this volume are: Our Orchestras and Our Money's Worth; The Depreciation of Music—wherein the author reveals an academic opposition to mechanically reproduced music differing radically from Ernest Newman's enthusiastic appraisal of it as an effective means of furthering classical musical taste; Sensationalism and Indifference (in orchestral conducting); Stravinsky as a Symptom (of musical decadence); Two Critics of Ultra-modernism (Dr. George Tyson and Mr. Cecil Gray); Vincent d'Indy in America; and Beethoven, to whom Mr. Mason devotes five short, concluding essays. Throughout the volume the author exhibits the extensive musical scholarship and the sound if somewhat narrowly orthodox taste for which he is distinguished.

RICHARD WAGNER *by Ernest Newman* (KNOPF. $3.00)

MOST musical commentators, however deeply they may go into the intricacies of the average operatic plot, usually fail the prospective opera-goer in at least two important respects: they do not, in the first place, incorporate the stage directions, which means that many telling bits of stage business remain incomprehensible to him (how many opera-goers, on first hearing *The Valkyrie,* gather the import of Sieglinde's glances toward the sword in the tree in the first act, or are even aware of them?); and, in the second, they do not expound to him the burden of the musical conversation, with the result that he does not know what the characters are saying. Especially in America, Wagner's own insistence that the words of his music dramas be made intelligible to his audiences is cheerfully disregarded, and his works given (as at the Metropolitan in New York) in a language incomprehensible to his auditors.

Ernest Newman's first volume of *Stories of the Great Operas,* dealing with the works of Wagner, is admirable in both of these respects and, in fact, in almost every other. To be sure, a few details worth mentioning have escaped even Mr. Newman—for example, the amusing scare thrown into David by the dancers in the final scene of *The Mastersingers,* and the subtle introduction by the orchestra of the Spring motif immediately before Wotan's reply to Fricka's reproaches

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in the second act of *The Valkyrie*—but for the most part any student of these accounts will find himself understanding with satisfying completeness what goes on not only upon the Wagnerian stage, but in the Wagnerian orchestra pit as well. For, as may be expected from Mr. Newman, whose studies of Wagner as a musician are unquestionably the most informative available, the music has received sound and authentic exposition. Incidentally Mr. Newman, instead of dealing first with the libretto and then separately with the music—as most commentators do—has interwoven his accounts of both, much as Wagner has himself sought to fuse both dialogue and music in his scores. And throughout Mr. Newman has written in that characteristically clear, unpretentious, thoughtful style which makes everything he writes as interesting to the non-musical reader as to the musician.

FRANKLIN NEUMAN

TRAGEDY *by F. L. Lucas* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $1.25)

RIVULETS OF PROSE *by Walt Whitman edited by Carolyn Wells and Alfred F. Goldsmith* (GREENBERG. $5.00)

IN A small book Mr. Lucas takes Aristotle's description of tragedy and asks himself how subsequent plays have modified that description. He takes the chapters on tragedy in the *Poetics* and discusses and qualifies them point by point, definition, purpose, plot, characters, diction, spectacle, the three unities. If he reduces tragedy to the bareness of "a serious representation by speech and action of some phase of human life", he does maintain his merits of simplicity and soundness. And at times, writing more readably, he elaborates the *Poetics* with some excellent modern illustrations, particularly those from the Elizabethan dramatists.

As he says, he goes back to Aristotle not for answers, but for questions. He goes back to get the best critical insight available and then tries to test it by time and good sense. His method works reasonably well. When it does not, that is partly the fault of his rapidity. Often enough, however, the method restores life and authority to his discussion. Then the writing becomes vivid on its own account and the critic animates the new description with his own insight. When Aristotle says that the gift of metaphor is the greatest of all, Mr. Lucas continues, obviously having in mind English plays, "To the far-reaching truth of the last statement, . . . criticism has hardly done justice"; and compares the dictions of Shakespeare and Shirley, though hardly doing justice to the latter; and relevantly includes, among other examples, Synge's return to the metaphors of popular speech.

That this method of inquiry might be applied to certain older American critics seems not to occur now to anyone. The exception of Dr. William Carlos Williams's essay on Poe is a very lonely one, even in the writing of Dr. Williams. Yet now the works of certain older American critics, Poe, Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, begin to have for us appreciable form, simplicity, permanence, authority. Those men have left us some rude maps to consult and modify. We have only to study them to find, roughly at least, our position and direction. Indeed, already in Emerson's day Whitman was pondering the older man's spiritual geography. How Whitman looked at the *Essays,* went on exploring, and drew in more details and whole continents, may be seen in his preface to the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass* and in the critical essays now collected in *Rivulets of Prose.*

In particular Whitman elaborated Emerson's view of nature and eventually worked out, among other things, a very simple but powerful criterion for literature. He phrased this criterion a number of times and perhaps most effectively in his old age in *A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads.* There he said that he had read the *Iliad* "in the full

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presence of Nature, under the sun, with the far-spreading landscape and vistas, or the sea rolling in". In the essays in *Rivulets of Prose* he compares such concrete natural standards with the poetry of Shakespeare, Byron, and Poe, and does so discerningly. By the juxtaposition of not dissimilar things he really defines his feeling of proportion and justice, as when he says that Shakespeare makes us think not of western forests but of palaces and gardens, and that the brilliant poems of Poe, read for a few days beside a pond in winter, diminish to the importance of lurid dreams. Whitman had discovered, by inquiry and advance, a new criterion, one almost as powerful as time itself: his sense of the mass of the visible earth and of the light of the sun. It is a kind of trial by fire.

WALT WHITMAN'S WORKSHOP *edited by Clifton Joseph Furness* (HARVARD UNIVERSITY. $7.50)

THIS book presents a number of hitherto unpublished Whitman manuscripts and Mr. Furness's careful study of the way in which Whitman worked. The principal manuscripts are some notes on oratory and for many projected lectures, a few anti-slavery notes, a radical campaign speech written in 1856, and several unused introductions for American and foreign editions of *Leaves of Grass*. These new prose pieces contain much familiar explanation and only an occasional good statement, but they do make more precise the known biography of Whitman. They are now less important as literature than as literary history. Even the latter importance belongs partly to the scholarly introductions and notes of Mr. Furness. Having dated a manuscript as well as he can, he relates it elaborately to Whitman's other writings, especially the similar ones, and to his whole character and lifelong development. For instance, the accumulated history of the poet's oratorical inclinations explains better than ever, though a little too emphatically, the effect of them on many of his poems, on such poems, for instance, as *By Blue Ontario's Shore*. Again, one note digresses to John Burroughs's *Notes on Walt Whitman as Poet and Person*, which recently some amateurs have ascribed to Whitman, and it shows clearly how the poet influenced the biographer and mentions Dr. Clara Barrus's forthcoming comparison of the book and Burroughs's contemporary journal. But, what is really valuable, indeed essential to the advancement of criticism, is that a good many of Mr. Furness's comments and apposite quotations show Whitman actually at work; in these notes nothing is more striking and illuminating than a sentence quoted from a rude sketch for a poem: "Every great problem is *The passage to India* (put this in literally)".

JOHN KEMMERER

THE ONLY TWO WAYS TO WRITE A STORY *by John Gallishaw* (PUTNAM. $5.00)

TWENTY PROBLEMS OF THE FICTION WRITER *by John Gallishaw* (PUTNAM. $5.00)

TO THE frequent taunt that the technique of short-story writing cannot be explained, these two fat volumes add nearly a thousand pages of able refutation. Not only can it be explained; it has been with varying degrees of success any number of times, and Mr. Gallishaw is only the latest of a number of men to set down his own ideas of the method. As a writer and independent teacher of short-story writers, his point of view is particularly interesting. The first of the books, *The Only Two Ways to Write a Story*, is a "case book" for the student of this fiction form; the second is a more detailed discussion of the various problems which confront the fiction writer and an explanation of the mechanics of effects which, consciously or unconsciously, are part of the equipment of successful writers.

Mr. Gallishaw's "case book" is an interesting and helpful volume for the writer who

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is anxious to eliminate his faults both of construction and of dramatic interest. Its plan includes a detailed analysis of a number of stories illustrating various types, but all of them, according to Mr. Gallishaw, falling into two main categories: stories of accomplishment and stories of decision. While there may be some to question this arbitrary and limited definition, it is quite obvious that some such limitation is helpful. Any critic may find exceptions if he chooses; Mr. Gallishaw presumably has been interested only in determining a means of classification which will give his students an understanding of craftsmanship and carry them over the rough places in the road.

Both of these books are designed to assist the writer who is studying without benefit of personal instruction. That they form an eminently complete equipment there will be few to question. Perhaps in that one word "complete", however, lies an implied criticism. For the two books present so formidable an array of analysis, suggestion, and illustration that many a student may hesitate to perform the intensive study which their full understanding necessitates. To one well started on the road, but still hampered with defects in his work, they will give valuable assistance. To the person who has never considered the short story critically, their very mass may prove somewhat bewildering. Perhaps, however, this deficiency is inherent in any attempt to answer all the questions which the inexperienced fiction writer may wish to ask. Certainly Mr. Gallishaw has provided the answers here. It is merely a matter of digging.

STEWART BEACH

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A VARIED SHELF

THE AFTERMATH. 1918–1928 *by Winston S. Churchill* (SCRIBNER'S. $5.00)

THE four bulky volumes of *The World Crisis* by the Right Honorable Winston Spencer Churchill might better have been entitled "Myself and My Share in History". They owed their value to the fact that they were the work of a British politician who, however erratic, had enjoyed almost incredible opportunities to know the inside story of events. During one of the most eventful periods in world history, he had headed no less than nine departments of His Britannic Majesty's government and had served in four Cabinets under three Prime Ministers. Like Mr. Churchill or dislike him, applaud him or laugh at him, you had no choice but to read his books if you were interested in the history of your own time. He had seen a fair share of contemporary history with his own eyes, and he could report it so vividly that it lived again before eyes less fortunate.

It is this quality in his earlier books which makes *The Aftermath* disappointing. All too frequently Mr. Churchill passes lightly over the story he alone can tell and repeats the stories that other men have told.

Mr. Churchill recapitulates the history of the Peace Conference and the Russian Revolution. In a very few passages—and these are important—he returns to his own story. Thus, Mr. Churchill is at pains to deny the assertions of the German historian, Novak, and of Ray Stannard Baker, that he replaced Lloyd George for a short time at the peace conference to hinder the plans for the League of Nations. On the contrary, says Mr. Churchill: "The only matter which concerned me at the three sessions which I attended of the Supreme Council was the quest for some policy in Russia. Absorbed in my own work, I was never even aware of these more spacious issues. I went to Paris on Russian business, and when it was clear no business could be done, I went home".

Again, he gives a lively account of the motives and extent of British aid to the Russian counter-revolutionary armies and describes vividly the tactics by which the British forces at Archangel and Murmansk were able to slip away under the very noses of the Bolshevists. There are excellent chapters on the settlement in Ireland, the Greek campaigns in Asia Minor and the birth of the New Turkey which, in view of the author's intimate personal knowledge of what happened, will always be of historical importance. As one of the principal advocates of the Dardanelles campaign, he naturally dwells on the fact that that exploit need not have ended in fiasco. If the British had persevered one day longer, Constantinople would probably have fallen. The Turkish defense was very nearly at its last gasp.

> Now we know that not only were there no more mines, but that the big guns of the forts, the only ones that could stop armoured ships, had only a few score shells remaining. A night's sweeping by the flotillas, a morning's bombardment must have revealed the bankruptcy of the defence. However, it was otherwise decreed. The Fleet recoils from all idea of forcing the passage of the Dardanelles; the Army, after heroic efforts, fails to capture the key points of the Gallipoli peninsula. So the flank attack is over; it has failed, and we all return heavily to the battle-front in France, where nothing but useless slaughter has in the meantime occurred.

The Aftermath seems to have been written with no plan at all. Rambling though it is, no one who wants to understand the world

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he lives in can afford to miss *The Aftermath*. Would that all contemporary statesmen were one-tenth as willing as Mr. Churchill to tell what they know!

JOHN BAKELESS

GLADSTONE AND PALMERSTON *by Philip Guedalla* (HARPERS. $5.00)

MR. GUEDALLA has introduced this first volume of the Palmerston Papers, which is simply the correspondence between Palmerston and Gladstone, with a sprightly essay on modern biography. It is his theory that biographers have at last recognized the virtues of brevity and that it is this which is the true contribution of the age to this form of writing. Biography, he tells us, "has ceased to be a purely manual process, in which the contents of thirteen deed-boxes are somehow split into three volumes, and it becomes (as it need never have ceased to be) an ingenious blend of scholarship and literary skill".

Yet, in the interests of history he does not believe that the biographer's work ends here. Having recorded his subject in a single volume, let him put out his papers *in extenso*. If biography must be a distillation, we are entitled to a sight of the materials from which the essence was distilled.

There is much that might be said against this ingenious theory. It is not often that we are interested in papers *in extenso*, nor is correspondence, even between statesmen, always as interesting as these letters between Gladstone and Palmerston prove to be. There is most certainly a place for biography which gives us a choice selection of papers forming part of the general story, even if it means that the life escapes the confines of a single volume. There is such a thing as distillation which leaves a pretty thin solution.

A second objection, that letters such as these demand some explanation which will hold them together, Mr. Guedalla has met by a commentary composed in the engaging style we have come to expect from the biographer of Palmerston. He shows us brilliantly the background against which these letters were written and makes a connected narrative of what would otherwise be a valuable but lifeless collection of documents. Though we may at times tire of writing which at all costs must be clever, there is no question that Mr. Guedalla has a magic touch which makes whatever he writes real and vivid.

The letters themselves touch on countless subjects but are most interesting in that they give a unique picture of the relations between a Prime Minister and his Chancellor of the Exchequer. If it is not especially exciting to follow the financial discussions which they held it is fascinating to read their confidential correspondence on naval armaments, their letters on the proposed nationalization of railroads and their exchange of views as to intervention in our Civil War.

Let not the reader be deceived by the title of this book into expecting a full length discussion of the contrasting personalities of Gladstone and Palmerston. The commentary gives us some idea of the difference in their point of view and of the circumstances which brought them together, but it tells only part of the story. The letters, plain and unadorned, are the substance of the book and should be read, as Mr. Guedalla expects them to be, as a supplement to his own life of Palmerston. They are a part of the unpublished material from which the essence has been distilled.

FOSTER RHEA DULLES

WITCHCRAFT IN OLD AND NEW ENGLAND *by George Lyman Kittredge* (HARVARD UNIVERSITY. $6.00)

THE publishers rightly proclaim George Lyman Kittredge's *Witchcraft in Old and New England* "a remarkable compendium of all sorts of stray notes about witch history". The 373 pages of text, distributed through eighteen chapters from five to fifty pages long, are crowded with references to the 223 pages

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of closely printed notes. Eminent American scholars like Mr. Kittredge believe the amassing of facts to be the chief end of scholarship rather than the interpretation of these facts in other than historical relationships.

This book is, therefore, not for the general reader, though anyone interested in witchcraft would find much to delight and to inform him. He would want to meditate on such statements as this: "It has never been easy—even for theologians—to discriminate between a prayer and a spell". He would be tantalized, and perhaps moved to independent investigation, by unexplained references to such phenomena as "the celebrated Sleeping Preacher" who "made a great noise in the world", and the "clever though indecorous device" by which King James detected a bewitched woman's lies. But only the student would care to follow the ardent defense of King James against the charges of stimulating witch-persecution.

Of more general interest is the well-presented thesis that witch-baiting has its roots in fear. From "abysmal antiquity" comes the belief that diseases may be the result of someone's malignant maliciousness. The witch may make barren a man's wife and fields, she may afflict with strange disease his children and his cattle, she may even cause his death. She is persecuted not because she rides on a broomstick or has a demon lover but because she is a menace to public safety.

It is in his defense of Salem that Mr. Kittredge fails to present all the evidence. He presents as his thesis that Salem is not so much to blame, since other witch-persecutions were more unsavory, and that Salem is to be praised since nowhere else have we record of public recantation on the part of judges and jury. The fallacy of the first excuse is easily apparent; that of the second is clear to the investigator. Mr. Kittredge has himself pointed out that those executed as witches in other places were in general forlorn women of biting tongue and evil reputation, often boasting of malpractices. Wherever he refers to victims of high social position, he carefully indicates the political web into which they had fallen. He omits to point out that the twenty Salem victims were by no means all of suspicious character; and that these people lost their lives only because they persisted in declaring themselves innocent and that all who confessed witchcraft were pardoned. Judge Sewall's recantation sprang from his fear that God was hewing down his children in punishment. The Salem witchcraft sprang from fear of what witches could do; it ended from fear—fear that the persecutors would become the persecuted.

RALPH AND LOUISE BOAS

THE ART OF THINKING *by Ernest Dimnet* (SIMON & SCHUSTER. $2.50)

THIS charming and informal book by a wise Frenchman is packed with such practical advice that it might well have been entitled "A Manual for Making Your Own Thoughts". Quite by accident, all of us have occasional thoughts which are the result of our own impressions and not merely habit or the echo of other people's opinions. When that happens, we experience an exhilaration with an effect like that of love on a young girl: everything about us glows with a heightened interest. But most of the time, as M. Dimnet points out, we live in a drab vagueness, not only about abstract subjects but even about our personal affairs. Due to the lack of a little sustained effort, our inner lives are poverty-stricken and, out of his own experience, M. Dimnet proposes a series of exercises, or disciplines, for making that exhilaration more frequent and more accessible. The exercises he recommends are so simple and so clearly useful that every reader will probably resolve to adopt them and, perhaps, practise them—for a day. He suggests, for instance, the reviving of our own past impressions in our imagination, substituting selected groups of images for the "whirl-

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pools of uncontrolled images" that flow through our minds, using the pad and pencil to help us in digging out our personal thoughts and making up our minds. M. Dimnet appears to overestimate our ability to be sincere with ourselves but, in spite of this, there can be no doubt that his exercises, if followed, would tone up the muscles of our brains and produce results in vigor, clarity and originality. They would supply, at the least, an infallible preventive against boredom.

LAWRENCE S. MORRIS

AND THEN CAME FORD *by Charles Merz* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $3.00)

MR. FORD has constructed the new Ford out of excellent and diverse parts with such ingenuity that it will run at seventy miles an hour and serve the interests of millions. Almost as much can be said for Mr. Merz's book. It is assembled with the skill of a social mechanic and a ready writer, from histories—especially Mr. Mark Sullivan's—from manifold records, especially the files of the New York *Times*—and wrought into a useful and exciting book. Like the new Ford it is far more than a collection of "parts", it has unity and drive. The reader can take it at well over 50 miles an hour and it will be of interest and use, or ought to be, to multitudes.

Mr. Merz has not written a biography of Henry Ford; he has given us a cinema of the motor age with Mr. Ford as its symbolic hero. The story of Ford's early struggles with his motor, his first company, the fight with his partner who thought him crazy, and the final vindication of his idea—his one idea—of "a car for everybody", is told with swift dramatic strokes.

To the author—as to most of us—Ford is a man, but he is also a symbol and at times a legend. The story of the "Peace Ship", of Ford's quarrel with the Jews, and of his sudden rush to collect antiques, from fiddles to locomotives, is treated with humor and intelligence. For the first time they seem to fall into their proper places in an American background, of which McGuffey's Readers, Model T, and the war's hysteria, are all integral parts.

The author has an admirable skill in making homely detail or shrewdly culled statistics speak out the general and symbolic meaning he is after. Of the phenomenon of a mighty motor manufacturer turned antiquarian he writes, "The old scene vanished. And a man who had helped destroy it by contributing ten million motor cars to a mighty stream of motors went about the country with a hatchet picking up the pieces".

THE IMPURITANS *by Harvey Wickham* (DIAL PRESS. $3.50)

"WE HAVE followed now the modern idea of love, from the infusoria to the mammal and to man. It is a false idea, written backward," runs the first sentence of the concluding chapter of this book. In prosecuting this intention the author examines the work of Otto Weininger, Havelock Ellis, James Branch Cabell, Marcel Proust, James Joyce, H. L. Mencken, D. H. Lawrence, Sherwood Anderson and others. By exclamation, innuendo, brickbats, common sense and some philosophy, all exalters of Mr. Wickham's idea of modern love are made to come off their high horses of learned or artistic flummery. Mr. Wickham likewise invokes "tradition", in consequence of which we have those bits of humor and the more serious counsel which grace the book. It is natural enough, therefore, that the author should regard the wisdom of the ages and their authority, especially in their more Christian aspects, as his allies; nor is it to be wondered at that "common sense" should be similarly made use of.

The most experimentalist and iconoclastic literatures of the last thirty years, especially on sex, surely offer both the traditionalist and the "plain man of sense" a rich field for criticism. There are open to him, it seems to me,

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two ways in which to attack them: one, by witty ridicule of their many absurdities; two, by a serious critique in the light both of tradition and common sense. In this book, unfortunately, Mr. Wickham attempts both and succeeds in neither. In the employment of ridicule, so it turns out, the author has taken unto himself a bad weapon. Its value is repeatedly invalidated by the serious matter which appears throughout the book—matter which is quite definitely attached to quotations, the quotations in their turn being interpreted without reference to their context. Hence, even when the author is right in principle, his particular points are unfairly scored off his antagonist. The ridicule, in short, is largely bludgeoning Menckenese, turgid and choked with irrelevant reference.

The book gets out of hand, shrinking and swelling in unexpected places. If the exploration or exposure of "modern love" is the author's object, why does he give for pages an admirable sketch of Proust's life and a fine appraisal of his work as a novelist, leaving only the second half of the Proustian section to his exposure of Proust's false philosophy? Or take it the other way round. If he proposed to do some justice to each writer as a whole, why does he, in the case of Ellis, neglect the bulk of his scientific and literary contributions to busy himself solely with the Ellis philosophy?

In short, writing in ridicule of what he conceives to be the philosophies of incoherence and confusion, his own analysis leaves an unfortunate impression of these same defects, without the gusto or genius of the writing in his chosen antagonists.

CHARLES R. WALKER

GOD'S COUNTRY—A SHORT HISTORY *by Ralph Barton.* (KNOPF. $4.00)

SAFE to predict that Mr. Barton's fantastic, galloping irreverent rewrite of U. S. history will, if it gets into the wrong hands, raise an everlasting howl. I can see the D.A.R. and the G.A.R. and all the other annoyed patriots burning the book in carload lots.

And I must say that a great deal of Mr. Barton's fun-making is not much fun, and that some of it makes me just a little bit sick. His illustrations are, on the other hand, quite wonderful. What could be better than "Uncle Tom's Cabin" unless it were "The City of Chicago in 1830"?

But to go back to the text. Here is a juicy morsel about the Commoner which shows Mr. Barton in one of his most successful moments of nose thumbing. Bryan, after resigning as secretary of state, "returns to the Chautauqua circuit, and a little later became a Saviour. While engaged in driving the biology teachers from the templed hills of Tennessee, in 1925, He was taken by a savage band of heretics and crucified. On the third day, His body rose from the tomb and it was stuffed, with the mouth open at its maximum, and placed in the National History Museum in New York, where it is an object of pilgrimage and veneration".

Much of the cheerful, vigorous hero-scalping and blasphemy, however, is a little forced, and seems more the result of unflagging determination than of gifted and imaginative malice. Mr. Barton refers to all the Presidents as if they were kings—James I, Martin the Weazel, James IV, Andrew II—and this is really good fun only the first few times. He dubs the members of the house of Representatives the "Pueriles", the Senators the "Seniles", the Presidents "Mister"—in addition to their kingly estate—and the two parties are "Multiboodlist" and "Uniboodlist" throughout.

"The Misterly Mansion [i.e., the White House] and the Capital were built entirely of teeth extracted from the mouths of fallen enemies in the American wars and the tropical sun of Washington playing upon the great masses of ivory sets the building forth in dazzling whiteness". . . . "Thomas Jefferson", throughout his conversation with visitors, "would spit on the carpet, belch and

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studiously explore his nasal fossae with his index finger."

There is a lot more of this sort of thing. I do not think one needs to be a D.A.R. or a superpatriot to find it repellent and to yawn more and more every time one meets another sample of it.

Mr. Barton is the kind of satire that sprays the landscape with a blunderbuss more from joy in the shooting than in order to hit something. Many features of our historic landscape are splashed with jovial mud, but not many of them are punctured.

ROBERT LITTELL

AN ELIZABETHAN JOURNAL, *edited by G. B. Harrison* (COSMOPOLITAN BOOK CORPORATION. $5.00)

THIS book purports to be "a record of those things most talked about during the years 1591–1594". In other words, it wanders, from the beaten track of history, among those day-to-day events of the Elizabethan years which the historians have passed by. And, as the editor very justly contends, "historians looking back have very different, and not necessarily better standards of value than the common man looking round". In this collection of extremely variegated bits of gossip, scandal, news and rumor, Mr. Harrison has attempted to piece together a kind of reconstructed newspaper of those years. And though the result is not likely to be mistaken for the files of a modern journal, it is perhaps not fundamentally very different.

Among such a multitude of items as our editor has collected, it is impossible to do more than mention a few. From the many accounts of the movements of troops, the apprehension of traitors, and the scurryings-about of great personages with which these pages bristle, the report of a visit which Queen Elizabeth paid to Oxford in 1592 is as refreshing as a paragraph from Will Rogers after columns of politics. Transportation being what it was in those days, visits were correspondingly lengthy, and the Queen stayed on this occasion about a week. The principal form of entertainment provided for her seems to have consisted of sermons and disputations, such as "Whether the soul of one man be more excellent than the soul of another", and "Whether on account of the age of the world, men be less heroic now than formerly". The Queen seems never to have endured the allotted time for these feasts of reason, either peremptorily cutting them short or making a monkey of the learned speaker; and numerous examples of the regal wit (more regal than witty) are delightedly reported.

Then, as now, some of the most eagerly awaited events were the executions, though then the populace enjoyed their savor perhaps more heartily, and certainly more at first hand. "At the gallows Lopez declared that he loved the Queen as well as he loved Jesus Christ, which coming from a man of the Jewish profession moved no small laughter from the standers-by." Those who are familiar with the literature of the time will recognize passages from Raleigh's immortal *Last Fight of the Revenge:* "All the powder of the *Revenge* to the last barrel was now spent, all her pikes broken, forty of her best men slain, and the most part of the rest hurt".

But let the reader dip in for himself. This book is indeed "somewhat to read for them that list".

T. S. MATTHEWS

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Co-operation with the Public Libraries of America

Spring is definitely here. The proof is the appearance of seven new titles in this month's Score, five of them fiction. A high percentage of the annual turnover in these lists. While *The Bishop Murder Case* stands third in the order of popularity, the three other "murder cases" by the same author make so creditable a showing that S. S. Van Dine personally should go to the head of the class. The total demand for his detective novels is far greater than for any single book in the list. Indeed, some librarians simplify their reports by making no attempt to discriminate among the four. They merely report "any book by S. S. Van Dine". When an author reaches that stage, where his name alone is sufficient to attract readers, he has become a contender for classic honors—at least, that. —F. P. S.

FICTION

1. PEDER VICTORIOUS	*O. E. Rolvaag*	HARPERS
2. OLD PYBUS	*Warwick Deeping*	KNOPF
3. THE BISHOP MURDER CASE *	*S. S. Van Dine*	SCRIBNER'S
4. SILVER SLIPPERS	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
5. JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN *	*H. W. Freeman*	H. HOLT
6. POINT COUNTER POINT	*Aldous Huxley*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
7. MAMBA'S DAUGHTERS *	*Du Bose Heyward*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
8. THE CASE OF SERGEANT GRISCHA *	*Arnold Zweig*	VIKING
9. HARNESS	*A. Hamilton Gibbs*	LITTLE, BROWN
10. ALL KNEELING	*Anne Parrish*	HARPERS
11. SILAS BRADFORD'S BOY	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
12. LANTERN IN HER HAND *	*Bess Streeter Aldrich*	APPLETON

GENERAL

1. ELIZABETH AND ESSEX	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT, BRACE
2. STRANGE INTERLUDE	*Eugene O'Neill*	LIVERIGHT
3. MOTHER INDIA	*Katherine Mayo*	HARCOURT, BRACE
4. JOHN BROWN'S BODY	*Stephen Vincent Benét*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
5. WHITHER MANKIND?	*Charles A. Beard*	LONGMANS, GREEN
6. THE ART OF THINKING *	*Ernest Dimnet*	SIMON & SCHUSTER
7. RASPUTIN	*René Fülöp-Miller*	VIKING
8. THE ROYAL ROAD TO ROMANCE	*Richard Halliburton*	BOBBS-MERRILL
9. MEET GENERAL GRANT	*W. E. Woodward*	LIVERIGHT
10. THE MAGIC ISLAND *	*William B. Seabrook*	HARCOURT, BRACE
11. GOETHE	*Emil Ludwig*	PUTNAM
12. ABRAHAM LINCOLN	*Albert J. Beveridge*	BOBBS-MERRILL

* *This title has not previously appeared in the Monthly Score.*

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BON VOYAGE

Mediterranean Shores and Waters

BY ARTHUR BARTLETT MAURICE

ONCE upon a time there was a poem to the effect that "over the sea lies Spain". Like the more familiar poem about the "student at Cadiz, who played on the Spanish guitar", it carried a suggestion of remoteness, of an unattainability akin to that of the Carcassonne of the much quoted Gustave Nadaud lines. But times have changed and the world has changed. The Spain of today is a country smiling welcome to the tourist, a land far different from the one of Napoleon's summing up when he said, "far different from the land of Mérimée's *Carmen;* Africa begins at the Pyrenees"; far different from the land Borrow found when he went there peddling his Bibles; far different from the land of George Bernard Shaw's picture in his *Man and Superman* of a quarter of a century ago.

Arthur Stanley Riggs, in his *The Spanish Pageant* (Bobbs-Merrill. $5.00), expresses much the same idea when he writes: "The true Spain is no longer—if, indeed, it ever could have been—the flamboyant, costumed poseur suggested by Zuloaga, the bloodthirsty pirate of jealous English records or the devouring monster so variously depicted by Prescott or by my good friend Don Vicente Blasco Ibañez". Mr. Riggs begins with Cadiz; works his way to Córdoba, Seville, Madrid and Granada; sweeps through the La Mancha country of *Don Quixote* to the Mediterranean and follows the coast northward through Sagunto to Barcelona: four hundred pages embellished with excellent illustrations.

There is in Seville a street known as the Calle Sierpes, which the flippant-minded American traveller, for convenience's sake, will very likely describe as "Snake Street in Seville". It is a famous street and a street worthy of its fame; and its winding course tells its name's origin. But some of the Seville street names are puzzling. "Why," asks Mr. Riggs, "was the Street of the Flea so called? Was it a sweet old cleric who thought of calling a very ordinary and winding little byway the Street of the Love of God?" And, then, there is the Street of the Head of Don Pedro.

In his description of the *Don Quixote* country, Mr. Riggs speaks of the size of the windmills. Instead of the giants familiar to travellers in the Low Countries, these windmills stand about twelve feet high, thus illuminating one of the most famous exploits of the crazy gentleman of La Mancha who, in tilting against one, was rather less crackbrained than has been supposed. Sagunto is a spot that thrills Mr. Riggs (as it does the writer) who ventures a suggestion never found in print, that the fortress, in the days of the Carthaginians, instead of being a considerable distance from the sea, looked directly down upon it, guarding a narrow defile. If it had been as it is today, the Carthaginians could have passed it by, merely leaving a negligible army to cover it, instead of incurring the long delay and bloody cost of one of the most famous sieges of history.

Seville is invariably the city most emphasized by those who write about Spain. The Danish writer, Martin Anderson Nexö, incidentally the author of *Pelle the Conqueror,* in his *Days In the Sun* (Coward-McCann. $3.00), sees in the famous tower, La Giralda, the symbol of the city. La Giralda means the weathervane. At the top of the spire stands a figure, a woman. She is fourteen feet high, weighs three thousand pounds and represents Faith—and she turns at the slightest wind! To the Dane and not to the American one

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must turn for the kind of statistics in which American travellers are supposed to delight. It is the Dane who pauses in the middle of rhapsodic description to offer the information that the Tower is three hundred and fifty feet high, that Seville has the highest death rate and the highest birth rate of all the large cities of Spain, that the rate of illegitimate births is also highest in Seville—17.4%, as compared with 2.6% for Barcelona.

There is much good reading in *Days In the Sun*. Nexö's chapter on the bull fight stands out even in these days when the Hemingways of the world are seeking to describe the traditional pastime from a new angle. His picture of the gypsies who inhabit the hill overlooking the Alhambra at Granada is likely to disillusion those who have been in the habit of idealizing Carmen, either in the Prosper Mérimée or the Bizet version. But cross with him the narrow expanse of water to Tangier, where the landing pier is just as much the gateway to Western Africa as the Apollo Bunder at Bombay is the gateway to India. Tangier is a city that is changing almost from hour to hour. In Nexö's pages the reader sees the city as it was some years ago, "a living oriental bazaar, a motley fairy-tale from the *Arabian Nights,* taken bodily out of the book and populated with fabulous characters of all kinds".

We get still farther into Africa by way of a little book which is in sharp contrast to the elaborate volumes of Mr. Riggs and Mr. Nexö, *Things Seen in Morocco,* by L. E. Bickerstaffe (Dutton. $1.50) in the "Things Seen" series. It is not a guide book, but the guide book has become rather obsolete in these days, riotous with what is known as "cruise literature". It pictures historically and descriptively one of the strangest lands to be found on the globe, the far flung outpost of the Moslem world, which retains many of the aspects of life as it was in the golden prime of the good Haroun-al-Raschid and is assuming importance in one of the practical and popular tours of the day.

The present writer, from experience, offers the suggestion that there is no other trip to Europe for a traveller, limited to five or six weeks' absence from home, which offers more color and romance than the one to the south of Spain and to Morocco, and which includes the following cities: Cadiz, Algeciras, Gibraltar, Tangier, Casablanca, Marrakesh, Rabat, Fez, Ceuta, Málaga, Granada, Seville, Córdoba. For the Moroccan part of such a journey the little book under discussion should supply excellent information.

A companion volume is Captain Leslie Richardson's *Things Seen in Provence* (Dutton. $1.50). Provence, the great sunny plain stretching from the Cévennes to the Alps, through which the silver Rhône rushes to the blue Mediterranean, is the land of the world's greatest lovers, Aucassin and Nicolette, Petrarch and Laura, the land of troubadours and medieval charm. Along the Rhône lie Avignon, where once the Popes ruled, and Tarascon, where the immortal Tartarin in his baobab villa dreamed of African lion hunts and Alpine adventures. At Avignon Captain Richardson corrects a popular fallacy and thereby almost shatters an illusion. Familiar to childhood in many lands is the old line that has come to us as *"Sur le pont d'Avignon, tout le monde y danse en rond"*. It should be, according to Captain Richardson, not *sur,* but *sous;* not on, but under; for it was beneath the arches of the old bridge, in the days when it was intact, that the youths and maidens of Avignon tripped the light fantastic on the greensward.

Every visitor to Marseille inevitably samples its famous *bouillabaisse,* either for pure gustatory enjoyment or as an excuse subsequently to refuse it elsewhere. Captain Richardson's advice on the subject is that, as there are many ways of serving the *bouillabaisse,* to choose the most simple and, if possible, to drink it in the open air by the seashore. As at Avignon he nearly shattered an illusion, here he does so when he writes: "The famous *bouillabaisse* described in

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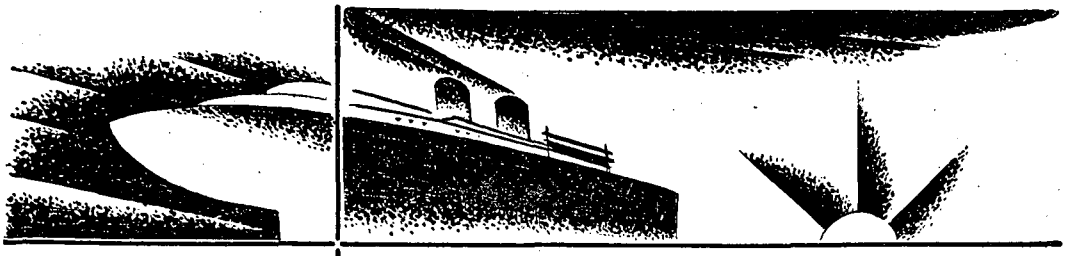

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MONTHLY TRAVEL INFORMATION

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Thackeray's ballad is a very Cockney affair and only fit for the ignorant British tourist on his first trip to Paris".

Provençal also is the Riviera of which Grant Richards writes in *The Coast of Pleasure* (Harpers. $4.00). To Mr. Richards, a champion of the Côte d'Azur as against the Côte d'Argent, the Riviera can be all things to all men, the purveyor of solitude as well as the entertainer of those in search of high carnival.

Mr. Richards offers the very practical information that the Riviera also caters to all purses. He realizes that travellers feel that it is unduly expensive, but asks, "Is it?", and goes on to say, "You can live quite decently on ten shillings a day and you can live on four pounds. Say two and a half dollars on the one hand and twenty dollars on the other. You can pay fifteen francs for your dinner, quite a decent dinner in its modest way, at the Boeuf à la Mode, five minutes away from the Monte Carlo Casino, in the Avenue de la Costa, or you can pay two hundred at the Hotel de Paris of Ciro's. And what is true of Monte Carlo is true of Nice and Cannes".

Throughout the ages many peoples have thought of the Mediterranean with a particular sense of possession. It has been "our sea" to Phoenician and Greek, to Carthaginian and Roman, to Cretan and Egyptian. Today it appeals not only to the people of the countries washed by its waters, but also to lands remote. There is almost a wistfulness in Emil Ludwig's *On Mediterranean Shores* (Little, Brown. $3.50). He writes:

"At first, one sea looks to us just like another. . . . Soon, however, we learn to know them apart; we distinguish between the appasionato of the Atlantic, the scintillating dreaminess of the Indian Ocean, the brooding secrecy of the East African Sea, and the unpeopled haze of the Pacific. But of all the bights and indentations, the Mediterranean has the most amazing individuality".

As a recorder of travel experiences Ludwig is, not unnaturally, a biographer rather than an impressionist. He sees in centuries; beyond the present he is looking for the past. For example: "On the visage of Genoa are graven, for every stranger to read, the signs of an adventurous past and a cautious present". Beginning with Genoa, Ludwig's journey took him to Paestum, Palermo, Tunis, Egypt, Constantinople, Troy, Smyrna, Jerusalem and Athens.

By contrast, Webb Waldron's *Blue Glamor* (John Day. $4.00) is decidedly of today. The author's pen, abetted by his wife's pencil, tells of a Mediterranean cruise made, not *de luxe,* but by means of economical freight steamers; a method involving uncertainty of itinerary and some sacrifice of material comfort, but promising high adventure to those seeking the flavor of lost old seas. The travellers of *Blue Glamor* sailed from New York on the *Kalkaska,* a vessel of 7800 tons, transferring at the Pyraeus to a sister ship, the *Agaronta.* Thus they circled the Mediterranean for the discovery of Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Italy, Sicily, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Discovery is the right word, for the quality of the book is its note of freshness. These travellers, taking with them a proper and understanding reverence for the historic past, seem to have adopted as a motto—a recommendation to all who seek the real zest of travel—"when we see a place for the first time, no one else has discovered it before". Fine bits of description, keen observation and wise conclusions are to be found in *Blue Glamor.* Mr. Waldron sums up Constantinople in the line: "It can be seen in a day or in a year. Any period longer than a day or less than a year is perilous". On the return journey the last discovery of the Waldrons was Morocco in general and Marrakesh in particular. Ten short years ago the "Red City" was little more than a geographical name. Today, judging from the travel books, all roads are leading to Marrakesh, as once all roads led to Rome.

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NOTES ON NEW BOOKS—(*Continued*)

the forests of Europe from whom came the supply of furs for imperial Rome, and then, later, the ermine and the sable that adorned medieval kings and nobles.

In colonial times, the fur trade was a dazzling prize for which the French, the Dutch and the Puritan settlers struggled. The tale of the hardships and dangers, of the resolute daring of the French voyageur-trappers is in itself an epic. After the founding of our nation, the fur trade became a primal motive in the expansion of our frontiers, the winning of the West. Aptness and richness of phrase, picturesqueness in portraiture of men and events, make this book highly readable.

DEEP SONG *by Irving Brown* (HARPERS. $3.50)

IRVING BROWN, who is assistant professor of Romance languages at Columbia University, records the researches of many years of travelling with gypsies of every continent, but chiefly with those of Spain. The object of his peregrinations has been to study gypsy life at first-hand and to collect Romani folk-songs, a good number of which he incorporates in his report, together with free translations from the curious Spanish dialects of the original versions. He includes in some cases their musical annotation; but, declaring that the true *cante jondo* owes much of its charm to the fact that its tonality has no relation to our major and minor scales, and also to the fact that it has no fixed melody —its rendition varying in accordance with the marked personality of the *"cantaor"* (*cantador*) —he lists in an appendix a number of authentic phonographic recordings. Other appendices classify varieties, deal with the chief singers, and set forth an extensive bibliography.

THE CURIOUS LOTTERY *by Walter Duranty* (COWARD-MCCANN. $2.50)

WALTER DURANTY here describes ten Soviet court cases which are as typical of present-day Russia as the Remus, Rothstein and Scopes trials are of the United States. They are all written from the "human", not the "fact" angle, and

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will be very satisfying to those avid of data that will justify their pre-conceived notions of Russians' political and personal lunacy. Mr. Duranty is the ablest, most unbiased and best informed journalist that America, or probably any country, has sent to the Soviet State. He pays a deserved tribute to his paper, the New York *Times,* for directing him always to send news he believed to be true. One would like a book from him dealing with cold fact as he has seen it during his seven years in Russia. Lurid color is observable in any landscape at times, but those who see it only in a thunder-sunset are likely to take away a distorted picture. An artist works in the steady light from the north.

Fiction

DAUGHTER OF EARTH *by Agnes Smedley* (COWARD-MCCANN. $2.50)

THERE is probably no type of human brutality as practised in the United States immediately before and during the war that Agnes Smedley does not describe in this book. Marie Rogers, whose autobiography it purports to be, survives life as a child on an old-type western farm, in a "company" coal town, as a teacher of Mexican children in remote areas, as a travelling woman who narrowly escapes rape and death, as a wife who insists on abortion to escape motherhood, as a college student whose leanings lead to her expulsion, as a New York socialist and as an inmate of the Tombs. Her attitude toward all intimate human relationship has been warped by her experience in her own home, and, with rare exceptions, human beings are to her wolves.

DOWNFALL *by Harold W. Brecht* (HARPERS. $2.50)

THE story of Malcolm Campbell is one of the most honest and illuminating records of adolescence ever written. It is the story of a boy who ostensibly has everything to make a good life with—health, a quick mind, a stable background and parents who love him deeply. But he is too dear and too close to his parents; his little sins and exploratory ventures have awful significance for them. They have no humor, no perspective. This child, their son, is started on the road to outlawry, he must be reclaimed at all costs. They withdraw the light of their countenances; at the moment of their deepest love and concern their son feels he has forfeited their love forever. He picks up what friendliness he can and takes what counsel he can understand: cheap, easy-going affection, counsels of expedience. There is a way to beat the game, he finds. Give these outraged gods what they seem to want—make a synthetic character to satisfy them. And so, being an intelligent boy, Malcolm becomes a hypocrite and a liar and a sneak. He has love again, which he does not trust. He is contemptuous of these gullible elders.

The story of this boy's rehabilitation and the short success that breaks at the moment he most confidently expects his triumphant system to hold him up is painful, but it is engrossing. Every adult who thinks *Penrod* and *Seventeen* are convulsingly funny should put *Downfall* on the shelf between them. Some page in this book will bring back an adolescent memory to every reader which will convince him that Mr. Brecht is saying something important and true.

FIRST LOVE *by Charles Morgan* (KNOPF. $2.50)

DISSECTING a book as delicate and humanly true as *First Love* is as pleasant and profitable as dissecting a flower. Nigel Frew, a young painter with the "look of a frightened monk", falls in love with Clare Sibright, and is asked by her fiancé to do her portrait. He fails, because, being an artist, he cannot be content with a mere likeness and, being a lover, he is forever seeing new depths and new colors and cannot therefore reach a satisfying imaginative synthesis. His tentative efforts are the failure of genius, and his work profits by the experience. Even the fulfillment of his physical passion later leaves him possessed of a dream, though because of it he is robbed of Clare herself. The story is told in retrospect in the first person, and one questions whether the boy could have been as analytic of his mental processes. It is laid in England in the 'seventies, and, while Mr. Morgan gives no convincing picture of the period, he was wise in his choice of time, for there is a necessary

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implication of leisured quiet, impossible to suggest of the present day. The book is a study of the interrelation of art and experience, with the former feeding and thriving on the latter, as must be the case when the artist is a genius.

ARMOUR WHEREIN HE TRUSTED *by Mary Webb* (DUTTON. $2.50)

ALTHOUGH Mary Webb's incompleted novel is only a fragment, the bright and delicate threads were broken off in so apt a spot that one scarcely feels any lack. Deliberately artificial in style, this story of a young English Crusader who was torn between a fleshly and a spiritual love has the stiff, patterned charm of a medieval miniature. It is richly and skillfully wrought, flecked with passages of beauty as a missal is flecked with gold. The short stories which fill out the rest of the volume represent more adequately the Mary Webb who wrote *Precious Bane* and who was a half-mystic lover of the English countryside.

PORTRAIT OF A CELIBATE *by Alec Waugh* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

THIS is the portrait of a fastidious, rather desiccated English gentleman or, more accurately, the story behind the face he showed the world. Stupid laws, now obsolete, robbed James Merrick of Marian Eager, who would have enriched and rounded his life. He learned to know and love her when she came to him as a client seeking divorce. The necessary proceedings would have made her notorious despite her innocence, and he offers her escape in elopement with himself. Though each sees in the other an ideal life-companion, she refuses, for she knows that such a solution would mean the permanent loss for him of his work and the temporary loss of his friends and country. She goes instead to Australia with the imperfect, but not impossible, husband. The author suggests that he has two theses in mind in this tale. The first, he declares, Proust could have written adequately. De Morgan has done the other from a different angle. One finishes the book, therefore, with the feeling that this portrait-painter, having tackled a particularly difficult and interesting subject, leaves its completion to one's own intelligence.

MADONNA WITHOUT CHILD *by Myron Brinig* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

DOMINATION of a human character by a single trait is likely to lead to abnormality, if not lunacy. That Myron Brinig has succeeded in making Mary Dunston not only dignified but occasionally attractive and, on the whole, convincing, is evidence of the ability shown in this first book. Mary is a dowdy spinster of forty, bereft of all companionship—a fact in itself unconvincing in one supposedly so human. Her thwarted mother-complex finds outlet in the daughter of her employer, whom she is willing to marry for the opportunity to mother his child. She is robbed of him by a lady less single-minded, and through her eventually robbed of the child—except emotionally. The conclusion leaves one satisfied of Mary's potential sweetness but not of her essential sanity.

FIVE WOMEN ON A GALLEY *by Suzanne Normand* (VANGUARD. $2.00)

THIS is the tale of five moderns who sought independence in Paris. They attempted to live according to their ideals and theories; earning unbuttered bread, believing in (and practising) free love. This novel is like some surprising, contemporary music which starts with treble thrills, and descends rapidly to minor chords. The friendship of the five heroines did not carry them through the struggle for existence. They were too sensitive; economics and society too hard. These lovely girls would have been more comfortable in a Watteau garden than in post-war Paris. Their conversation and standards are Twentieth Century but their essential characteristics belong to crinoline days. The author has succeeded in making life seem very difficult for the unmarried working woman. However, *Five Women on a Galley* is amusing reading and is, moreover, that rare thing: an extraordinarily good translation from the French.

PEACH BLOSSOM *by Hugo Wast* (LONGMANS, GREEN. $2.00)

BECAUSE of its quite beautiful and smoothly flowing prose—lamentably rare in translations —*Peach Blossom* will leave many readers, especially those who care more for a story teller's

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manner than for his story, in an unexpectedly pleasant frame of mind. For Mr. Wast has allowed his theme to preoccupy him too much: his peasant girl and his city man, Simplicity and Depravity, act their melodrama in the mountain village of Dolores, to which the latter has come along with other bored summer visitors. There are exasperating moments of unfairness to the hero-villain which only prevent the reader from giving his sympathy where the author intended it should go; and the overstatement of the theme often makes one's enjoyment of the prose impossible. But, as we have said, the book provides pleasant reading, due in no small part to its translators, and the occasional top-heaviness of the plot need not prevent us from realizing that Hugo Wast is an able story-teller.

SIX MRS. GREENES *by Lorna Rea* (HARPERS. $2.50)

MARRIAGE into the same family constituted the chief bond between the six Mrs. Greenes. Otherwise they differed sharply in age and temperament. When the least imaginative of the six conceived the idea for a family dinner party, it was clear to the other five that the idea was not a happy one. That incongruous reunion gives the book its unity, for it is made up of six short stories about the six Mrs. Greenes. Mrs. Rea characterizes her half dozen women vividly and neatly, gives one a sense of their place in the family pattern and handles adroitly the difficult structure of her novel. She has insight and dry humor.

THE CASE FOR THE DEFENDANT *by Hans Aufricht-Ruda.* (LITTLE, BROWN. $2.50)

BACK in 1834 there was a neurotic daughter of a French general in the garrison town of Saumur who wrote herself and others a series of insulting letters, supposedly from a gay but unpopular lieutenant stationed there. With this situation as a starting point, Herr Aufricht-Ruda has reconstructed from his own imagination many elements that might plausibly have led up to such an affair. This task he has accomplished with no small skill. He presents the lieutenant as a rebellious, misunderstood creature whose life was warped by stern paternal influences. The girl is a shy neurotic, just out of the convent. Between these two twisted spirits the author builds up a weird unspoken affection that leads the accused man at once to divine the psychological truth of the whole affair and to take the blame for the letters himself. Modern Germany has turned out few pieces of fiction as powerful as this.

FUGITIVE LOVE *by Negley Farson* (CENTURY. $2.00)

THE story of a turbulent romance between Jenny Cain, daughter of a hard-boiled Chicago contractor, and Torsten Alberg, a homeless Swede. The scene of action, of which there is plenty, moves from a road-construction camp in Illinois back to a wild and woolly climax in Chicago, where a self-starting gunman is rendered *hors de combat* by the old-fashioned fist method.

STEPPING HIGH *by Gene Markey* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

IT IS the morning after a disastrous "first night" and the dancing team of Darrell and Sloane is discovered in the throes of a matrimonial struggle. But the sun breaks through the clouds—they sign a fat contract with a night club—Miss Sloane attracts the attentions of Alexander Winton, bachelor de luxe, and the fun begins. We follow the engagingly vulgar Darrell and his ambitious wife and partner from night clubs onward and upward into the loftiest reaches of Long Island society. The woman, with feminine adaptability, seeks to rise. The man remains at his own honest level, unspoiled by success. Finally they split. A divorce threatens—the wife thinks she has hooked the eligible bachelor—the husband is in despair. The ending is happy and natural. The book is more readable, more entertaining, than nine novels in ten that you will pick off any bookseller's shelves.

OTHER WAYS AND OTHER FLESH *by Edith O'Shaughnessy* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.00)

THIS is a personal and atmospheric description of life in a little town in the Austrian Tyrol. Written with Mrs. O'Shaughnessy's unfailing charm and skill, it will appeal to lovers of style and sentiment. The book is composed of a series

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of sketches of various characters and incidents in the village of Rankweil—the two spinsters who serve drinks in the local tavern, the village doctor, the author's mother. One cannot help wishing that the writers of best-sellers had but a fraction of Mrs. O'Shaughnessy's talent for making real feeling articulate.

THE LOVE CLINIC *by Maurice Dekobra* (PAYSON & CLARKE. $2.50)

MAURICE DEKOBRA tosses off frothy, sophisticated and swift-moving tales with rare facility. In *The Love Clinic,* Dr. Schomberg, an urbane but malevolent individual, attracts a group of beautiful women to his secluded château in Bohemia. There he places them under his hypnotic influence with the intention of driving out of their nature all love for men. The story is concerned with the adventures of a romantic diplomat who dares to invade the château and carry away a beautiful Viennese girl who had fallen under the spell of Schomberg. Despite the rather weird atmosphere, Dekobra never permits the story to become depressing. In a deft manner he gives a pseudo-intellectual tone to the novel, which, blended with his unusual subject and a slightly ironic humor, succeeds in placing the story above the general run of popular fiction.

Detective and Mystery Fiction

THE THREE AMATEURS *by Michael Lewis* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $2.00)

AS A last resort when Scotland Yard failed to solve the murders of Sebastian Blaxworthy and his wife, two men and the orphaned daughter put their heads together. Starting from scratch they unearthed new clues, set a trap into which the murderer fell, and cleared up several peculiar facts about the Blaxworthy family.

DEATH ON THE AIR *by Herman Landon* (LIVERIGHT. $2.00)

TO THE tune of *O Sole Mio* both Hector and Clarice Callender are murdered. A clever tale of mystery in which radio plays an unusual part.

THE STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE OF MARY YOUNG *by Milton Propper* (HARPERS. $2.00)

The murder of pretty Mary Young in a roller coaster at an amusement park in Philadelphia casts suspicion on a score of people who might have been responsible. Through the efforts of Tommy Rankin, attached to the local detective force, the perpetrator of the crime is brought to bay, after an exciting chase halfway across the continent and back again.

THE MAYFAIR MURDER *by Henry Holt* (DIAL PRESS. $2.00)

A WELL constructed murder mystery that holds interest throughout. Had the murderer not made one little misstep, Bill Seward, innocent, and on the eve of his wedding, would have been hanged.

THE THREE COURIERS *by Compton Mackenzie* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

A VIVID tale of British Secret Service work in the Balkans during the World War, where Roger Waterlow matches his intelligence against the Germans, to prevent a Balkan state from joining the German offensive. The author, an ex-Secret Service man himself, explains, in his interesting manner, the importance of seemingly irrelevant details in the vast system of espionage that England conducted in connection with the movements of her armed forces.

THE MIND READER *by W. Adolphe Roberts* (MACAULAY. $2.00)

SCIENCE, the fourth dimension and the pillaging of New York City are all featured in this somewhat improbable tale in which mystery lovers will find plenty of excitement.

AN EYE FOR AN EYE *by Frances Hickok* (HALE, CUSHMAN & FLINT. $2.00)

GHASTLY experimental research work, in the name of science, causes Dr. Dolmain to lose his

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sense of proportion, but retribution overtakes him and he suffers a horrible death.

LET IT LIE *by John Goodwin* (PUTNAM. $2.00)

A HUNT for gold in an English cottage brings to light a ghastly pile of bones that bodes evil for John Shirley and his bride, Cecily. A tale of unflagging suspense.

THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP SEA *by Elizabeth Jordan* (CENTURY. $2.00)

NICHOLAS LONG, counsellor-at-law and life-long friend of rich Catherine Chandler, finds himself at her death the head of a wild family. For six months he is in close contact with a jumbled assortment of selfish and dissipated house guests, who, once they leave the house overnight, are no longer beneficiaries. In this period one mystery after another is unravelled, until the purpose of the strange will is fulfilled. A novel and interesting plot.

THE PERSON CALLED "Z" *by J. Jefferson Farjeon* (DIAL PRESS. $2.00)

THE photograph of a pretty girl leads Dennis Sherwood across the moors, where he is able to circumvent a sinister plan to defraud her of a rightful heritage.

THE HAMMER OF DOOM *by Francis Everton* (BOBBS-MERRILL. $2.00)

THE inventor of a new process of making steel is found crushed to death in the jaws of a hydraulic hammer. A solution is manufactured, but Inspector Allport is not led astray. He bides his time, springs his trap, and catches his prey.

MIASMA *by Elizabeth Sanxay Holding* (DUTTON. $2.00)

'WHEN all enjoyment in life is gone, it is better to die—and I can help you on your way pleasantly," said Dr. Leatherby. But he hadn't reckoned on his assistant, Dr. Dennison. Torn between honesty and loyalty to his benefactor, Alexander Dennison brings to a focus several strange events and loses one girl only to fall into the arms of another.

THE GREEN TOAD *by W. S. Masterman* (DUTTON. $2.00)

AN APPARENTLY innocent English country home is the scene of several burglaries and finally a murder. These events are linked up with George Barran, apparent heir of John Barran, but the story, aside from the usual villainies and a pretty romance, reveals a tragic secret at the climax.

THE WOMAN HUNTERS *by Arthur Somers Roche* (CENTURY. $2.00)

A TALE of the New York underworld in which a gambler of good family reforms in order to protect a charming *nouveau-riche* girl against an unscrupulous gigolo. Full of thrills, with a careful observance of detail.

THE SINISTER HISTORY OF AMBROSE HINKLE *by Thomas McMorrow* (SEARS. $2.00)

BETTER known to readers of *The Saturday Evening Post* as "Little Amby", master criminal lawyer, this character has been created by Mr. McMorrow, a lawyer himself, to show the possibilities for evil that lie in the hands of an unscrupulous lawyer.

LORD PETER VIEWS THE BODY *by Dorothy L. Sayers* (PAYSON & CLARKE. $2.00)

LORD PETER WIMSEY, dilettante and amateur crime-detector, stops, looks, listens, and in his spare time settles twelve curious and obscure cases with ease. Intriguing and absorbing, these stories are obviously the work of a practised hand.

THE CUIRASS OF DIAMONDS *by Edgar Jepson* (VANGUARD. $2.00)

AN EXCITING tale wherein a Cinderella and her lover outguess the combined efforts of international crooks to secure her cuirass of diamonds, worth a king's ransom. Lord Henry Foulsham, diamond thief de luxe, double-crosses, and is double-crossed, at the round-up.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE XXX)

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THE BOOK MART

How many book collectors are there in America? That is a question which has vital significance to a considerable number of dealers in books. It is obviously a question that admits of no exact answer. There are a large number of collectors who do not wish their activity in this line to be generally known. There are many more who are never seen in the auction room and seldom in the stores of the dealers in old and rare books. They make their purchases from some one bookseller who may have served their fathers before them. The triennial list given in that useful publication, *Private Book Collectors,* which has eliminated the names of booksellers and librarians and which does not print any name without the consent of the owner of the same, includes less than five thousand names. Mr. John A. Holden, its compiler, does not pretend to anything like completeness in the list, but in its latest—the sixth—printing, points out that whereas some 335 addresses have been deleted from the list of three years ago, nearly 600 new names of book buyers with hobbies have been added.

Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach recently told a publisher that there were five thousand book collectors in the United States. Another who is in a position to hazard a guess told the same publisher that there are a hundred thousand book collectors. Both probably were equally right and equally wrong. As the Napoleon among dealers in rare books, Dr. Rosenbach probably has a very different conception from that of his fellow-bibliophile as to what is a book collector. His list might well include only those people who spent from a few thousand to a million dollars a year for books. The other's idea was based upon the belief that a man who may buy only a dozen books a year dealing with some particular subject or by some particular author, with a view to keeping these books, is a book collector. True, the dispersal of his "collection", after his death, may not largely augment his estate or cause any reverberations of the Kern sale in the auction room. Yet he has, after all, been "collecting". The number of such people, as any dealer in rare books will tell you, is not only large, but it is constantly increasing. These men and their collections are rarely heard of and even their associates in business and social life may not know anything of their hobbies. One man, for instance, reads a book by, say, Van Wyck Brooks. He likes it, and gets another, and yet another. Ultimately he tries to find out what this author has written and thinks it would be worth while to pick them up, as occasion offers, to put with those he already has. He has become a book collector without knowing it, and builds up a Van Wyck Brooks collection. Or he may be interested in the manufacture of stew-pans, and buy every book he can find dealing with the subject of stew-pans. He is one of the hundred thousand collectors, though he may never get into the five thousand in Dr. Rosenbach's blue book.

The matter is of some consequence, for the ninety-five thousand Brooks-stew-pan collectors are going to buy a good many books in the course of a year, without the urge of any Book-of-the-Month or Crime Club. And they are going to provide bread and butter for a good many more dealers than will the others.

Of these minor collectors probably a large percentage go in for biography. When a man gathers some thousands of books about Washington or Lincoln, people are very likely to know about it. This is not the case with the man who makes a modest collection of books and pamphlets about his grandfather who was in the Civil War and who occupied a place then prominent and now

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forgotten. He may find only a score of titles, but he has a collection. And there is something in the collection of contemporary biography akin to the collection of modern first editions. It is doubtful that many of Theodore Roosevelt's associates devoted themselves, with any degree of assiduity, to collecting all that was written about him. Yet only a few days ago a New York dealer issued a catalogue containing 228 titles of books by and about Theodore Roosevelt, and this did not contain some items practically unknown, like *Hoofs, Claws and Antlers of the Rocky Mountains,* published by Frank Thayer in Denver in 1894, with an introduction by Theodore Roosevelt. Possibly one reason for this was that most of the edition went up in smoke in the bindery, and it was not until *Camera Shots and Big Game* was published in New York in 1901, with those splendid photographs by Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Wallihan, friends of the big game hunter, that the work became known. The later issue is now listed as a Roosevelt first edition. Until we have a complete Roosevelt bibliography the collector will have to go on doing the best he can with the help of the dealer. How many of these collectors there are is a mere matter of guesswork, but it is plain that the man who began while Theodore Roosevelt was living has an advantage over the increasing number of Roosevelt collectors today.

When a collector makes good use of his collection, either by compiling a bibliography for the use of those who follow him, or by printing for the general good the material which has come into his possession, book collecting reaches its highest point and the hobby is justified of itself. Take the case of the Boswell Papers, from Malahide Castle, so

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mysteriously acquired by Col. Ralph Isham, of Long Island, a year or so ago. These Boswell Papers, now being privately printed in a sumptuous edition by William Edwin Rudge, of which the first three volumes appeared last December, have been eagerly bought by collectors (mostly from Dr. Rosenbach's preferred list, probably) with the result that they have made a record surpassing that of any "best seller".

Then there's George Bernard Shaw. Attention has already been called to the constantly increasing appreciation of Shaw's books and autographs. In the recent Hatton sale at the American Art Galleries there was an item which brought $1,700, the "Order of Service for the Dedication and Consecration of the Colours of (Welwyn Branch) British Legion to be Held at St. Mary's Church, Welwyn, on Armistice Day, Sunday, November 11th, 1928". The organizer of the Service received back, in response to his invitation for Mr. Shaw to take part in the service, a card which read:

"With Bernard Shaw's compliments. I don't mind the Club Room and will take the tickets; but if there is any lightning left in heaven God help you when you go to church to congratulate Him and one other on four years of murder and devastation. I never read anything more wickedly blasphemous than the Service you have sent me. G. B. S."

The Order of Service itself was annotated by Shaw, with numerous underlinings and about 180 words in his autograph, ending:

"Not a word of penitence and confession! of disillusion and humility. Not a suspicion that God is not a Colonel in the British Army. Nothing but an unashamed conviction that we are entitled to God's congratulations on an event in which He had the privilege of being entirely on the British side."

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THE PATIENT IN ROOM 18 *by M. G. Eberhart* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

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MASS MURDERS *by L. C. Douthwaite* (HENRY HOLT. $2.00)

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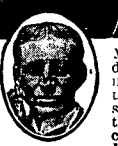

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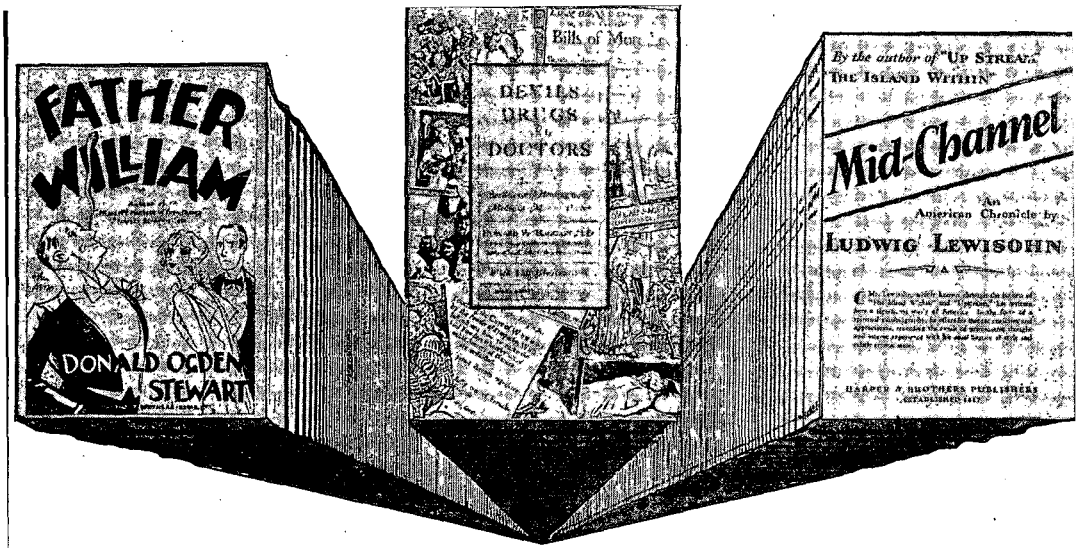

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